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HRH Princess Basma addresses Wednesday the National Women's Committee (Petra photo)

Princess Basma requests expansion of women's alliance

MAAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma on Wednesday called for expanding the membership of the Jordan National Women's Committee Alliance to make it represent the largest possible number of women.

Addressing the committee's members in Maan Governorate, who number 500, Princess Basma voiced satisfaction over the members' enthusiasm to implement the committee's various programmes and their attempts to reach the various residential areas of the governorate.

"We have great hopes and aspirations despite the fact that we are still in the beginning of the road," Princess Basma said.

"With determination and

clarity of vision we can achieve our goals and objectives," the Princess added.

She called for defining "We have great hopes and aspirations despite the fact that we are still in the beginning of the road."

The needs of the Jordanian society in general and women in particular, urging women to take part in finding solution to problems facing them in cooperation with the concerned authorities in the governorate.

Princess Basma said the committee was about to launch a national programme aiming to upgrade women's participation in various aspects of life, pointing out that coordinators and rapporteurs of national women's committees will be elected in September.

Earlier at the meeting, Maan Governor Mustafa Khleifat delivered an address in which he commended Princess Basma's efforts aimed at supporting women's causes at various levels.

Another address was delivered by Maan women's committee rapporteur Salwa Abu Tayeh who also paid tribute to the Princess' role and who reviewed the achievements of the Maan committee.

Prince Hassan suggests creation of national industrialisation establishment

AMMAN (Petra) — During a tour of Jordanian Armed Forces workshops Tuesday, HRH Crown Prince Hassan said the Kingdom should create a national industrialisation establishment to meet the state's various needs, especially maintenance requirements, and then create a national centre for building industries that cater to the country's future needs.

The Crown Prince said that such centres can coordinate work with the Higher Council of Science and Technology which provides technical advice.

Prince Hassan referred to next month's Japan Week to be held in Amman noting that two days of this week will be dedicated to explaining Japanese industrialisation policy.

He stressed that Jordan should try to benefit from Japan's distinguished expertise in industry-related fields.

He said that strenuous efforts must be made and wise planning drawn up for the most efficient management and utilisation of resources.

The Crown Prince, accompanied by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafiz Marei Kaabneh, visited the Prince Faisal Technical Workshops and listened to the workshops' commanders outlining the different processes in the maintenance of machinery and equipment used by the armed forces.

He later visited troops in the field and met with the officers.

The Crown Prince concluded his tour by visiting the Martyr Abdullah Ben Al Hussein Infantry School.

Crown Prince calls for Jordan-Bahrain youth accords

Visiting Bahraini sports official thanks Kingdom for support

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday said that it was important for Jordan and Bahrain to work out an executive programme to implement bilateral agreements in sports and youth affairs.

Speaking at the Royal Court during a meeting with the visiting head of the Bahraini Sports and Youth Corporation Sheikh Issa Ben Rashid Al Khalifeh, the Crown Prince said Jordan is interested in maintaining constant contacts between youth organisations and clubs in Bahrain and Jordan and exchanging expertise in these affairs.

Sheikh Issa thanked Prince Hassan for his continued support for the sports and youth sectors and voiced his country's determination to conclude agreements on cooperation with Jordan in these fields.

He also voiced his country's appreciation of Jordan's support and assistance to ensure security and stability in Bahrain. Recent acts of sabotage in the Gulf state claimed several lives and caused extensive damage.

For his part Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti conferred Wednesday with Sheikh Issa, who was accompanied by Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh, Minister of Higher Education Abdullah Ensour and Bahraini Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Seif Musallam.

Following the meeting, Sheikh Issa said his country appreciates Jordan's stand with regard to the latest disturbances in Bahrain, adding that bilateral relations are unique and historic, and marked by brotherly cooperation in various fields.

Mr. Daoudieh said the two countries are now solidifying their strong ties through executive programmes of action in the field of sports and youth.

He said that the two sides are determined to do all they can in order to bolster their relations and strengthen their cooperation in youth affairs.

Earlier Mr. Daoudieh and Sheikh Issa signed an agreement covering cooperation in sports and youth



HRH Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday meets with Sheikh Issa Ben Rashid Al Khalifeh, visiting head of the Bahraini Sports and Youth Corporation at the Royal Court (Petra photo)

affairs and pledging the two sides' readiness to exchange visits by officials and youth teams and conduct research and participate in youth camps and conferences involving the youth of both countries.

The agreement also

underlines the need for youth clubs from Bahrain and Jordan to hold regular meetings and organise training camps, exchange sports expertise and assist each other in maintaining youth and sports installations.

The two sides created an ad hoc committee to meet every two years alternately in Manama and Amman to follow up on the implementation of the five-year agreement.

TCC to use 7-digit telephone numbers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) new telephone subscribers will be assigned telephone numbers with seven rather than six digits, according to TCC sources Wednesday.

TCC sources quoted by Al Aswaa daily said the new system will be introduced first in the Tla Al Ali district of Amman and later expanded to the other areas of Amman as well as other towns. They said the existing six-digit numbers will continue to operate and would not be changed.

The sources said the new system is needed to reduce the growing pressure on the TCC's telephone exchanges and to allow for more room for additional telephone lines, especially in the major towns.

The new system will be in operation as soon as the buildings housing the Tla Al Ali exchanges have been completed, added the sources.

At the same time, the sources said the TCC plans to carry out a nationwide plan to expand the capacity of the existing telephone exchanges within a general expansion programme that is expected to cost JD 100 million.

TCC Director General Walid Dweik has called a press conference Thursday to provide more details about the new system and the expected changes.

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Participants hail RMS medical conference

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Foreign and Jordanian participants gave an enthusiastic account of the organisation and the scientific contents of the first International Medical Congress organised by the Royal Medical Services (RMS) which opened Tuesday in Amman.

Nihad Tamimi, nephrologist at Kent and Canterbury Hospital, U.K., defined the congress as "fantastic, very well organised" and the standard of the academic sessions, which started yesterday, "very high."

"The conference is very informative," Violeta Duley, a participant from New York, specialised in family practice, said.

More than 1,000 participants from 23 Arab and foreign countries, specialised in all medical fields, from cardiology and plastic surgery to neurosurgery and dentistry, as well as haematology and anaesthesiology, gathered here for the congress, which was officially inaugurated by His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday.

Particularly outstanding was the participation of prestigious specialists from the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Austria, Greece and Belgium.

"Our doctors are given the possibility to greatly benefit from the contributions of all these well-known speakers, who came here to share with us their knowledge and experience," said Hakem Kadi, member of the scientific committee of the congress.

Dr. Kadi, who is also head of the Neurology Department at King Hussein Medical Centre, cited as an example of the high academic standard of the congress the lecture given yesterday by Dr. David Barrett, a urologist at the Mayo Clinic in the U.S. A satellite link between the prestigious U.S. medical centre and the King Hussein Medical Centre was established last November.

"We hold satellite live consultations on a monthly basis to discuss controversial cases," Youssef Qoussous, director of the RMS, told the Jordan Times in an interview earlier last week. He said the satellite link with the King Hussein Medical Centre is

the first such link which the Mayo Clinic has established with a counterpart outside the U.S.

A medical tele-conference on "Atrial Fibrillation," moderated by Dr. Qoussous and Dr. A.J. Tajik from Mayo Clinic, will be broadcast at the Farah Centre Auditorium of the King Hussein Medical Centre Thursday afternoon. The tele-conference is open to the public and will see the participation of four cardiologists from Mayo Clinic.

"The main target of this first international medical congress is upgrading medical education, giving our doctors the opportunity to share the latest achievements in medical technology and procedures, and update them in all specialties," Dr. Qoussous said.

The 37 scientific sessions of the conference, which will close Friday, take place at the Philadelphia Hotel, while five workshops on urology, plastic surgery, laboratory, endoscopic diagnosis and neurosurgery are held at the King Hussein Medical Centre.

Apart from the scientific sessions, in which more than 130 scientific papers are being presented and discussed, and the workshops, the busy schedule of the congress includes social events, such as trips to Jerash, Madaba, Petra and Aqaba, as well as an exhibition of the latest technologies in medical equipment.

"More than 45 companies are participating in the exhibition, and we are really delighted with the interest showed by the numerous visitors," said Faleh Nasser, chairman of the exhibition committee.

"We had more than 1,000 visitors on the first day," Dr. Nasser said.

With over 800 doctors and 1,730 beds distributed in nine hospitals all over Jordan, the RMS is widely considered the best medical institution in Jordan and provides medical coverage to nearly 40 per cent of the Kingdom's population.

The secret to provide an efficient medical service? "Continuous upgrading and serious training," Dr. Qoussous told the Jordan Times.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- MUSICAL PLAY**
 - * Jordanian grand musical play "Meadows of Dreams" (on children's rights) at Al Hassan Bin Talal Auditorium, University of Jordan at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- FILMS**
 - * "Accion Mutante" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thurs., May 16, at 6 p.m.
 - * "Honky Tonk Man," at the American Centre on Thurs., May 16, at 5 p.m.
 - * "Joan Miro," (Spanish with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Khalid Khreis) at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, on Thurs., May 16, at 6 p.m.
- BALLET**
 - * Ballet performance at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thurs., May 16, at 4 p.m.
- EXHIBITIONS**
 - * Products of Noor Al Hussein Foundation at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Friday, May 17 (from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.).
 - * Ceramics exhibition at Al Baidar Hall of Kan Zaman (until May 21).
 - * Bani Hamida annual spring exhibition, "Visions," (including new rugs) until May 26.
 - * Annual Spring Exhibition at the Jordan River Design entitled "New Beginnings" until May 23 (call 613081/2).
 - * Works from the collection of Musa del Brudaba "Expanol contemporaneo-Marbella "From Picasso to our Present Days" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 6.
- READING**
 - * Novel Reading by Dr. Diana Abu Jaber at the Fulbright House in Shmeisani on Thurs., May 16, from 4-6 p.m. For more information, call 684760.

Jordan, U.N. to hold meeting on literacy for children and adults

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Education in cooperation with four UN organisations are next month organising a four-day meeting in Amman to assess progress in the drive to guarantee education for all children and reduce adult illiteracy by the end of the century.

Minister of Education Munther Masri said Wednesday that at least 200 delegations from around the world and the concerned U.N. organisations will take part in this meeting which, he said, will be "a follow up and evaluation meeting of the World Conference on Education which was held in Thailand in 1991 where 155 countries pledged to take the necessary steps to provide primary education for all children."

Dr. Masri said that the Ministry of Education has prepared a tentative programme for the June 16-19 meeting which will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein.

The concerned U.N.

agencies involved in the meeting are the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the U.N. Population Fund.

The four U.N. agencies said in a statement that the meeting has been called to assess what has been accomplished by nations and the international community to fulfil the commitments of providing education and reducing illiteracy by the end of the century.

Much progress has been made in terms of higher enrolments and better and more relevant education in many countries, noted the statement.

But it said much more needs to be done, noting that there are still 130 million children who have no access to school, the majority of them girls.

It is unacceptable that the world that spends approximately \$800 billion a year on weapons can not find the money, an estimated \$6 billion a year, to put every child in school by the year 2000, the statement added.

According to the statement, the Amman meeting will be a milestone on the road to universal education and to its positive effects on economic development, infant survival, reproductive health, birth rates and the overall empowerment of people, especially women.

It said that decisive and radical solutions must be found at both international and national levels to the problems that countries face in meeting the basic learning needs of their populations.

But it added that no real breakthrough will be possible unless commitment to this goal is translated into a serious rethinking of resource priorities on the part of national leaders and the international community alike.



The Ministry of Education is seeking to guarantee education for all children and adults in an effort to reduce illiteracy by the end of the century (file photo)

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Media with self-help

THE REGIONAL seminar for journalists in the Middle East organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in cooperation with the International Organisation of Journalists (IOJ) had a long list of issues to discuss during its two-day meeting in Amman Tuesday and Wednesday. The main theme of the deliberations of the participants was naturally "Media Coverage of Humanitarian Situations." Under that heading, participating Arab journalists debated several issues ranging from how the media can stop or reduce human suffering during wars and natural disasters to objectivity of news coverage on armed conflicts when civilians also become victims.

Many journalists voiced concern about selectivity, bias and double standards in reporting on humanitarian issues particularly against the backdrop of Western domination over news organisations. The West's virtual control of the international news media ended up occupying centre stage in the discussions. Some participants naturally did not share the concern of the majority on this issue as they pointed out the Arabs still prefer to listen to Western radio and television stations and read foreign newspapers to get accurate information.

The important point here is not whether the West exercises hegemony over the dissemination of information or whether the coverage of news is biased or not. The main issue should be how to advance the role of Arab news media organisations and make them more credible and accurate. Short of taking direct control of Western media outlets, through buy outs, for instance there is not much that we in the Arab World can do to change their products. It would be infinitely more constructive to concentrate on what we can do ourselves to our own mass media to make it more dependable and trustworthy.

Given the fact that the mass media in this part of the world is still largely controlled by governments, Middle Easterners would find it extremely difficult to depend on their own national sources of information for receiving precise news and analysis. The panacea of course lies first and for all in the introduction of genuine democracy and pluralism. With regard to coverage of humanitarian issues, however, there was a consensus and rightly so among the seminar's participants that we in the Middle East need to create areas of expertise for our journalists before we go on to do better things. Coverage of humanitarian issues is one such area since it calls for specialised training and when the ICRC, IOJ and other international organisations can help.

What matters in the end is what we, Arab journalists, are willing and ready to do to further our own cause.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON a meeting on the development of rural women which started in Amman Tuesday, Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that everybody agrees that efforts must be made to raise the standard of women in the rural regions but this should be the task of the government. Voluntary groups and various other private sector and non-governmental organisations are called on to back the government's endeavours if the objective of improving the lot of these women is to be achieved, said the paper. Raising the socio-economic standards of women in the rural regions can by no means be achieved without ensuring democracy, pluralism and respect for human rights in every sense because these are vital components of the development process, continued the daily. These are questions which King Hussein focused on in his address at the opening session of this important conference which enjoys international community backing, added the paper. According to the daily, development can be no means be achieved in a situation where conflicts and sufferings exist, but rather in an atmosphere of peace, stability and security and there is need for all parties and all governments to work hand in hand to enhance sustainable peace that, in turn, would ensure sustainable development.

The View from Academia

Islam and the damage from within

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

IF ISLAM is presently undergoing acts of misrepresentation and distortion of sorts, and I believe it is, much of the misrepresentation and distortion is ironically coming from within. Many Muslims, out of ignorance and misunderstanding as well as of selfish and deviant motives, are presently doing their religion, and themselves, a great deal of harm. It is sad indeed to see a refined, sophisticated faith such as Islam sink so low due to the practices of some of its proponents and to see Muslims not only deprive themselves of many of its blessings but turn it to work against themselves.

Examples abound. The other day, my year-and-three-month-old son fell and injured his hand. As he kept on crying and resisted all attempts to make him move his hand (out of pain and fear, we discovered later on, not out of anything serious), I took him to the hospital — one of the biggest and most frequented in the capital as well as one of the, supposedly, better-organised and modern — to make sure he had not seriously injured his hand. I came to the emergency ward and stood behind a young gentleman who was waiting to be helped. I waited full three minutes; my son was still screaming (now partly due to pain and partly from seeing doctors and nurses in white, a sight which must have reminded him no doubt of painful shots).

When it became evident that the person in front of me was not being helped (he was leaning against the glass window looking angry, smoking nervously, and muttering words to himself at a speed of hundreds per hour), I peered through the window to see what was going on, thinking to myself that the clerk was probably on the phone (as the custom is at many of our public and private institutions) talking leisurely to someone about his grandmother's wedding arrangements or some other not urgent, silly subject. I could not believe what my eyes saw. The clerk was standing fully erect and motionless in front of four people leading afternoon prayers.

Let me explain the hospital procedure before I go on with the story. If you came to the hospital without a previous appointment (i.e. in case of an emergency), as in my case and the case of the unfortunate gentleman who was standing before me, you had to come to the emergency wing, stand at the glass window, show the necessary documents (mainly the insurance card) to the clerk who would fill out your name after making sure the card was valid and direct you to the doctors and nurses on duty. What this means is that, in the majority of cases (if not in all), you will not get medical attention unless and until the said clerk checks your insurance card, fills the necessary form and hands it to you to give to the medical staff on duty.

Angry at what I saw (and hundreds of similar daily sights that came rushing out of my oppressed memory and suppressed subconsciousness to wrestle and overpower reason and self-control in me) and responding instinctively to my son's cries and the young man's wrath, I said audibly: "What is this? What is this idiot doing?" Encouraged by my reaction, the young man embarked on telling in a hysterically loud voice to all those standing in line by now how he came to sign in his brother, found the clerk on the phone, waited a couple of minutes, how the clerk hung up, rushed to a white sheet and, without talking to the young man, spread it on the floor and called on the four elderly men (no one knew what they were doing behind the glass window in the first place, for they looked like visitors and not employees — maybe they were the wedding guests at the clerk's grandmother's wedding) to stand in line, as he stood in front of them leading the after-

noon prayers.

I am not going to reflect on the quality of service at many of our public (at times even private) hospitals, except to say that I am still naïve enough to believe what I see in the movies about emergency services in other, more fortunate parts of the world: how everyone rushes to meet a patient in need of immediate attention and about how seconds, not minutes and hours, count in certain medical cases, and how the psychology of patients and their companions also counts. What I wish to reflect on here, however, is the un-Islamic behaviour of my devout-looking fellow Muslim clerk and the sad state of Islam in the modern-day Arab and Islamic worlds.

While we were venting our anger and frustration in all kinds of ways and commenting on the deteriorating behaviour of the "Arab" and "Muslim" of today, the pious clerk was leading prayers as slowly, devoutly and piously as if he were the imam of Al Aqsa Mosque or Al Haram Al Sharief. The minutes felt like hours and when the holy "imam" finished his prayers, he turned around to shake hands with the four elderly gentlemen, stood up, folded the white sheet, came to his chair looking as if he had done nothing wrong whatsoever, and extended his hand without looking to receive the insurance card from the young gentleman.

Had he asked someone to cover for him (there was actually an accountant sitting, minding his own papers at another table), there would have been no problem. He could then have prayed as leisurely and slowly as he wished until doomsday. Had he asked the young gentleman about the urgency of his brother's case, excused himself politely (having found the case not so urgent), and rushed to perform the prayers singly and quickly, one perhaps would have also understood. But to be totally indifferent to the needs and feelings of people (in an emergency ward) and to lead group prayers while urgent cases were awaiting his precious signature, that was totally irresponsible, cruel, inhuman, and un-Islamic. Half an hour later, as I was waiting in front of the X-ray room, I saw the young man's brother stretched on a mobile bed naked from the waste up, tossing and turning, and moaning aloud. (His case looked pretty serious to me.)

Much can be said here. Let me, however, confine myself to the following two points:

First, why is it that most people in the Arab-Islamic World (a majority I would say) take their duties and responsibilities so lightly when Islam makes it crystal clear that one of the most important obligations of Muslims is to serve their fellow human beings? Service, Islam insists, is a form of worship. Why then is the quality of service in our hospitals, public institutions, banks, shops, etc. so poor? Does not Islam say in the clearest possible terms that "if one of you does something, one must do it well"? You send your TV set to a specialist, and he ruins it; you send your car to a mechanic of repute and you drive home with more problems than when you drove it to him; you entrust your manuscript to a publisher and his expert team of editors, and you find errors your five-year-old son would have corrected.

Do not we, Muslims, pride ourselves on the prophet's telling us that if we offer water to a thirsty dog, we are doing an act of great piety and worship, and that if we remove a stone from the road, we are being true to the letter and spirit of our religion? I like and highly appreciate Islam because (among other things) it does encourage Muslims to make their world worth living in, to cater to the needs of fellow human beings, and to expect a degree

of care, felicity and happiness. Offering water to a thirsty dog and removing a stone from the road say a great deal (much more than one can in books) about the beauty and humanity of the Islamic faith. If Islam is asking us, nay expecting us, to be caring and humane, why then are many of our patients not treated as mercifully and benignly of our ancestors treated the thirsty dogs? If Islam today as our ancestors treated the thirsty dogs? If Islam teaches us to be environment-conscious (and it does), why do many of us throw Pepsi cans and much other garbage in the street, spit in the roads, spill oil from our cars in the middle of the road and leave it behind us for other cars to skid on and cause disasters? The questions could go on for ever.

One answer is obvious: many of us claim to be true Muslims when in fact they are not. Good Muslims do not abuse their jobs in emergency wards at hospitals, do not throw Pepsi cans in the street, do not spit in public roads, and do not spill killer-oil and leave it behind to damage other vehicles. Those who do these things are either ignorant or, worse, hypocrites.

I was reading Surat Al Baqara the other day. The first few verses in it speak about believers, a few verses follow which speak about infidels, and two full pages speak about hypocrites. Hypocrisy nowadays, as in earlier days, is perhaps Islam's fiercest, most ferocious enemy. And hypocrisy is generally defined as saying what one is not doing or doing the opposite of what one is preaching. Ask that clerk whether it is important or not to serve patients speedily and efficiently. He will answer plainly, I am sure: "Of course, it is." Why does he not do it then?

The other answer is that many Muslims today have confined their practice of Islam to either rites and rituals of worship (primarily prayers and fasting) or speeches about work and duty and have forgotten all about Islam in daily life. This is un-Islamic for, as evident from the sayings of the prophet I have just alluded to, Islam is a way of life, and deeds and works are important. Islam makes it clear, when speaking of believers, that deeds or works are essential to the faith. Unless one's faith is translated into daily acts (among which is one's duty and official responsibilities), one's faith is not complete. It is as if many Muslims today were applying half of Islam's teachings.

The second point the incident above illustrates is the misunderstanding of Islam. Islam, for highly plausible reasons, encourages Muslims to take part in group prayers (salat al Jama'ah). The only obligatory group prayers, however, are the Friday noon prayers — the incident above took place Thursday afternoon. Another thing is that group prayers are supposed, actually, to foster community spirit and commitment to issues of public concern. It is ironic that a person who stands to lead a group of visitors to prayers and shake hands with them warmly is extremely indifferent, lacks courtesy and is unconcerned about other members of his own community. We all tell the story of Caliph Omar who sent a person out of the mosque when he saw him spending an exaggerated amount of time on prayers, saying: "Go out into the world and make a living." Had Omar been the head of the hospital, he would have either fired the clerk or reprimanded him severely.

What I have cited is not an isolated case but a whole phenomenon, one which is harmful and disturbing. Islam needs to be rescued from hypocrites and from those who misunderstand and abuse it. And we must begin by exposing and publicly denouncing such harmful, disturbing behaviour. This is an urgent responsibility of Muslims today.

Will weapons bring peace?

By G. H. Jansen

"THE MORE things change the more they are the same." Along with this French saying is the Anglo-Saxon phrase: "Back to square one."

Those two adages describe the situation on the Lebanese-Israeli border where a small military event in Israel's occupation zone on May 12 could be of great political significance.

What happened is that Hizbollah guerrillas set off a roadside charge as an Israeli patrol was passing and when other soldiers gathered at the spot, the Hizbollah fired at them using, among other weapons, an anti-tank missile.

Casualties: between five and seven wounded Israeli soldiers, of whom two were moderately injured and one seriously. This was followed by reprisal raids by Israeli planes and helicopters on "Hizbollah targets" in the area north of the U.N. buffer zone and in the eastern Bekaa Valley.

If this situation sounds familiar, it is because it is a repetition of what had happened scores of times before the "Grapes of Wrath" offensive. And what is more, the Hizbollah kept strictly within the bounds set by the ceasefire "understanding" that brought the "Grapes of Wrath" attack to an end last month — no shooting from civilian areas into civilian areas or at civilians but only at military men in the occupation zone.

The leader of the Israeli opposition Likud Party, Benjamin Netanyahu,

had said that the latest "understanding" was "useless" and would not endure and that he was now able to say that everything he had predicted was coming true; that Hizbollah had won the "Grapes of Wrath" battle and that the government of Shimon Peres had allowed itself to be fooled into accepting a ceasefire according to the same terms set out in the 1993 agreement.

"The 'Grapes of Wrath' attack had been worthless: all the hundreds of aerial sorties, the bombings and machine-gunnings, all the thousands of shells fired into Lebanon, killing 174 Lebanese, the destruction wrought on South Lebanon with whole villages destroyed, all this was for nothing."

But far more important than giving one side political advantage was the

fact that this event proved that the "Grapes of Wrath" attack had been worthless: that all the hundreds of aerial sorties, the bombings and machine-gunnings, that all the thousands of shells fired into Lebanon, killing 174 Lebanese, including the 101 victims of the Cana massacre, that the destruc-

tion wrought on South Lebanon with whole villages destroyed — destruction estimated at half a billion dollars — that all this was for nothing. With the situation on the ground back to square one.

Does this mean that Israel will learn the very

important lesson that the application of superior military might achieves little or nothing politically, and that the purpose of military means is to achieve political ends? Will it? Not likely.

Because the Jewish state is not only a militarised state with a huge armoury

of weapons but is also a heavily militarised society. What, it may be asked, is the point of having masses of soldiers and lots of weapons if they are not going to be used against the enemy?

But does that bring peace? Well, that is another matter.

LETTERS

Should water be a privilege?

To the Editor:

SUMMER IS now in full swing, and so is the water problem in Jordan. Those who have been dealing with it practically every summer, surely know how frustrating it can be to cope with water scarcity during the hot season. Most conscientious citizens understand the importance of saving and consuming rationally every drop of water, bearing in mind that water is everyone's lawful right. Sights like broken pipes gushing water in the streets are often the cause of deep concern and disbelief that this can be still happening after so much has been said and written about water shortages in Jordan. Is there any hope that the old pipe lines will ever be replaced, or do we have to hear again about how costly and complex it is to undertake such projects?

Jordan TV, on the other hand, is running a quite friendly and interesting series of commercials constantly reminding citizens of their duty to save water and to remember that water is not supposed to be a privilege but God's gift, and as his children, we are equally entitled to it. Can't JTV run a similar series reminding the authorities of how vitally important it is to maintain the water network and preserve rather than lose what God has blessed us with?

Browsing through the water-rationing schedule that was publicised in all local newspapers, however, makes me wonder if water has become more of a privilege for some and less of a privilege for others.

For instance, in densely populated areas such as Jabal Al Hussein and Weibdeh, according to the schedule, water will be pumped twice a week, whereas in areas such as Sweifieh, Deir Ghar and Abdoun, citizens, apparently luckier, will receive water four times a week. I would not be at all surprised if I were told that the

pipes in those areas are a couple of inches wider than in other areas, (they are certainly newer and therefore more efficient), and water quantities pumped quite sufficient to fill the largest swimming pools.

The first question that comes to my mind is on what basis was such a schedule prepared and approved. Was the population taken as a decisive factor, or were other reasons more important? Needless to say, areas supplied four times a week will never feel the water shortage.

The engineers in charge may argue that pumping water twice a week is quite sufficient and yes, I do agree, provided that the water network is properly maintained so that water can be pumped at sufficient pressure to reach all household reservoirs. Apparently this is not the case, because already private vendors are taking advantage of poorly supplied areas. It does not really make sense to pay ten to fourteen Jordanian dinars for a full load water-truck every ten days for the duration of the whole summer season, or be forced to install extra water tanks and a private pumps, which may be a solution to those who can afford it, but not to the majority of people.

I am certainly hopeful that the concerned authorities will take all things into consideration and come up with a solution before frustration mounts along with the peak of the summer time.

Rymiana M. Nuseibeh,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Moscow, Chechens 'ready to talk'

MOSCOW (R) — The Russian government and Chechen rebel leaders could start peace talks within days, Interfax News Agency said Tuesday, quoting a senior member of Moscow's state commission for settling the conflict in Chechnya.

"It is a question of the coming days," the agency quoted the official as saying after a meeting of the commission. "An agreement in principle between the parties on the renewal of the negotiating process has been achieved."

Interfax said the Swiss head of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Chechnya had met separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who took over when Dzhokhar Dudayev was killed in a Russian attack last month.

The OSCE's Tim Guldemann met Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin following his talks with Mr. Yandarbiyev and was now back in Chechnya for further talks with the rebel leader. He declined to report back to the Russian premier, the agency said.

"In spite of public statements...the parties are prepared to sit at the negotiating table without pre-conditions," it said.

Mr. Yandarbiyev has said that talks were the only way to peace in Chechnya but insisted that they should start only after Moscow proves a commitment to order Dudayev's assassination. There was no indication the rebels had changed their position so far.

No independent confirmation of the report is available.

Earlier Tuesday, Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov, a member of the commission, had told Interfax that "consultations" with the rebels could start this month.

President Boris Yeltsin, anxious to

show progress toward resolving the bloody 17-month conflict before next month's presidential election, has said he will fly to Chechnya in person this month to try to push the peace process ahead.

Interfax quoted unidentified sources on the state commission as saying senior ministers had urged Mr. Yeltsin Tuesday to put off the trip because they could not guarantee his safety.

Parliament Speaker Gennady Seleznyov, a member of the Communist Party that is Mr. Yeltsin's biggest threat in the poll, said the commission had not discussed such a plea to Mr. Yeltsin.

But he added: "I see no point in making such a trip...If it is a part of the election campaign it is strange. What can it do for the president who started this war?"

Sporadic clashes continued in the Caucasus region overnight and troops hunted for guerrillas in the capital, Grozny, amid reports rebels were planning to attack Mr. Yeltsin if he visited.

News agencies said rebels attacked an army post in Grozny with automatic rifles and grenades early Tuesday. It was one of more than 20 incidents across the region in 24 hours.

The army again bombarded rebels at an old Soviet missile base at Bamut in western Chechnya Tuesday, Interfax said.

The agency quoted the Federal Security Service (FSB) as saying 32 Russian building workers, held by the rebels for six months, had been freed, one of the biggest hostage releases this year.

Mr. Yeltsin launched a peace initiative six weeks ago, but it has done little to ease the fighting which has lost him the support of many of his original liberal supporters.

There have been growing signs, however, that Moscow is stepping up behind-the-scenes efforts to renew contacts with the rebels, broken off after a brief ceasefire last summer.

Mr. Mikhailov was quoted as saying: "Certain members of the state commission have already contacted the 'Dudayevists'."

Talks could be renewed at the level seen last autumn, he said. Mr. Mikhailov was willing to meet Khoshaev, a member of the separatists at previous talks in Grozny.

A top Chechen guerrilla commander has warned President Yeltsin that his men will try to "make sure he never leaves this place again," Commander Shamal Basayev declared on television.

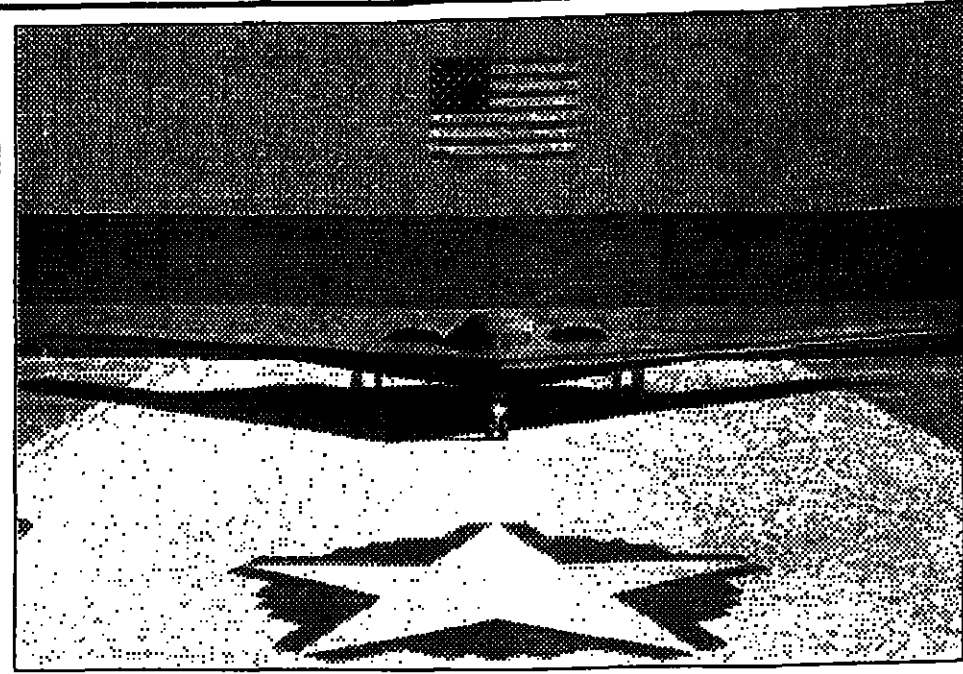
"We will take corresponding measures to give him a warm welcome. We will try to make sure he never leaves this place again," Commander Basayev said in an interview screened on commercial NTV television late Tuesday.

Commander Basayev, one of Russia's most wanted men, led a hostage-taking raid in the southern Russian town of Budennovsk last summer.

He said his men would step up guerrilla activities in the breakaway province if Mr. Yeltsin went ahead with his planned trip.

Commander Basayev, whose position in the guerrilla command structure has been enhanced by the death of Dudayev, said he was adamantly opposed to any peace negotiations with Russia.

"I am in favour of continuing the war until we achieve victory," he said.



The Air Force said it had grounded the U.S. fleet of \$2 billion B-2 "Stealth" bombers after a crack was found in an engine exhaust clamp on one of the 10 Northrop Grumman Corp. planes. The Air Force said it stopped flights of the batwing B-2s, stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri on May 10. The plane is shown at its rollout in 1988 (Reuters photo)

B-2 bombers grounded for checks

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Air Force said Tuesday it had grounded the U.S. fleet of \$2 billion B-2 "Stealth" bombers after a crack was found in an engine exhaust clamp on one of the 10 Northrop Grumman Corp. planes.

The air force said it stopped flights of the batwing B-2s, stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, last Friday after a crack appeared in a clamp holding one of four General Electric Co. engines on the plane.

Inspections began Tuesday to determine the extent of the problem and decide whether General Electric should provide new titanium clamps for the engines which it builds for the radar-avoiding jets, an air force official said.

The Pentagon is in the process of buying a total of 21 of the revolutionary planes from Northrop Grumman at a cost of more than \$45 billion and has resisted pressure from Congress to buy more because of budget cuts.

The revolutionary bombers are built with rounded shapes and materials that absorb or deflect radar signals and are, therefore, extremely difficult to detect.

"All systems have their growing pains," one air force official, who asked not to be identified, told reporters. He said the service had found cracks in the clamps previously and called it "a minor problem."

"We made the wrong call," said another air force official when pressed why the

safety stand-down was not announced until Tuesday.

Originally designed during the cold war to drop nuclear bombs on the Soviet Union, the B-2s are being re-configured to carry conventional bombs and cruise missiles.

Navy Captain Mike Doubleday, a Pentagon spokesman, said he did not know how long the "precautionary stand-down" of training flights would continue, although the air force said some training flights could resume as early as this week.

A concern regarding a clamp in the Tailpipe assembly of a B-2 aircraft was discovered last Friday. An inspection procedure is being designed to determine if any other B-2s have this problem," Capt. Doubleday told reporters.

"I believe that the clamp was cracked and there was concern that the assembly — which was like the Tailpipe that this clamp held in place — would shift. They (military authorities) are most anxious to figure out what they can do to correct that problem and (to determine) if the problem exists on other aircraft," he added.

The administration, bowing slightly to heavy pressure from Congress, said in April it would increase the planned fleet of B-2s from 20 to 21.

At that time, President Bill Clinton ordered the air force to spend \$493 million provided by Congress to upgrade one test model of the jet to operational status instead of retiring it.

Adams challenges Major on IRA disarmament demand

LONDON (R) — The leader of the British political wing challenged British Prime Minister John Major Tuesday to delete a key disarmament demand and guarantee "real" Northern Ireland peace talks in June to win a new IRA guerrilla truce.

Gerry Adams told Mr. Major not to put pressure on the IRA with "rhetoric," and sounded a warning that inconclusive talks could herald further violence in the troubled British province.

Mr. Adams said that if a struggling

two-year peace process was to be restored, no item, particularly the sensitive topic of disarming the guerrillas, should be allowed to hold up progress in all-party talks in June.

"The British government and the Unionist leaderships have made the issue of (arms) decommissioning a blockage. This must be removed."

"Obviously the issue has to be resolved to everyone's satisfaction but it cannot be a precondition."

Britain, backed by Ireland, says Sinn Fein will not be given a place in the

June talks unless the IRA reinstates a truce it ended with a London bombing campaign in February.

Sinn Fein accuses London of preparing to allow Unionist leaders representing the region's pro-British Protestant majority to stymie political progress by demanding the IRA hand over their guns.

Britain and Ireland hope the talks will end two years of strife between rival Catholic and Protestant backed guerrillas over the future of British sovereignty.

Minister blasts Indonesian in Miss Universe pageant

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesian Minister for Women's Affairs Mien Sugandhi has blasted an Indonesian woman for taking part in the Miss Universe contest in Las Vegas, the official Antara News Agency reported Wednesday.

Indonesian beauty contest winners are supposed to go to such events only as observers but on Monday local newspapers published a photograph of 20-year-old law student Alya Rohali posing with other contestants in a swimsuit.

If the Indonesian participant, Alya Rohali, had gone only as an observer she should not have posed in such a vulgar way," Ms. Sugandhi said at a news conference.

There is a long-standing consensus that Indonesia will never send anyone to such beauty contests," she said.

The Jakarta Post newspaper said Wednesday that Alya Rohali, the foundation which selected Ms. Alya from hundreds of hopefuls last March, had sent her to the pageant as an "active observer."

Ms. Sugandhi said it was disrespectful to compete while a nation was still mourning the death of the first lady, Mrs. Soekarno, who died last month.

Did women women competing in local beauty contests wear the traditional dress of their ethnic group.



Miss Indonesia, Alya Rohali, 20, of Jakarta is judged on the swimsuit portion of the 1996 Miss Universe pageant. The judging consists of swimsuit, gown and personality interviews. The winner of this year's crown will be announced during the final judging on Friday. Indonesian Minister for Women's Affairs Mien Sugandhi has blasted Miss Indonesia for taking part in the Miss Universe pageant (Reuters photo)

9 Indonesia hostages freed; 2 still held captive

JAKARTA (AFP) — The Indonesian military launched an operation Wednesday to release nine people, six of them Europeans, held hostage for more than four months by separatist rebels in the eastern province of Irian Jaya, a spokesman said here.

"It was a military operation and they were freed as a result of it," said military spokesman Brigadier-General Amir Syarifuddin.

The nine — three Indonesians, two Dutch nationals and four Britons — are "in good health" and are currently "under medical supervision," Brig. Syarifuddin said.

Troops are looking for two Indonesians still in the hands of the rebels, he said.

Brig. Syarifuddin said the release took place around seven kilometres (four miles) northeast of Gese-lama, a hamlet a few kilometres north of Mapuduma, the mountainous site where the original abduction took place.

Brig. Syarifuddin declined to comment when asked about casualties in the operation. He did not say whether an armed confrontation took place or provide other details.

The rebels, from an organisation called the Free Papua Movement (OPM), had taken 26 people hostage in the mountainous area of Mapuduma on Jan. 8.

All but 11 — six Europeans and five Indonesians — had been released before Wednesday's operation.

"We can confirm that the four British hostages have been released and are in good health," Charles Gray, deputy head of the British embassy told AFP.

"The two Dutch hostages have also been released as well as three Indonesian hostages," Mr. Gray said.

"The exact details of why and when (of the operation) are still unclear," he said.

Mr. Gray said the freed hostages were in a remote part of Irian Jaya Wednesday evening.

"They are upcountry

tonight. Because of the bad weather conditions it is impossible to lift them out tonight," Mr. Gray said.

The Europeans released are: Britons Daniel Start, 21; William Oates, 22; Anne Van Der Kolk, 21; and Anna Melvor, 20; and Dutch nationals Mark Van Der Wal, a WWF official, and Martha Klein, a U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) environment official who is eight months pregnant.

The hostages were working on a scientific expedition organised by the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The Indonesians released were Adinda Saraswati, Jualita Tanasale and Markus Warip, while the two still held hostage are Navy Panekanan and Yosias Lasamahu.

The military operations were launched after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) last Thursday withdrew from efforts to get the release of the captives.

A church source in Timika, Irian Jaya, said Wednesday that the local airport, which had housed troops and aircrafts linked to the hostage relief efforts, was bustling with activity but the source could not further elaborate.

"The news of the release, if true, is a great relief for us," said the sister of released Indonesian hostage Adinda, adding that the family would take her to Bali "to forget all her suffering."

The private television channel Rajawali Citra Televisi-Indonesia reported that the military would hand over the freed hostages to the ICRC at Jakarta's Halim Perdanakusuma Airbase Friday.

Throughout the hostage drama, the OPM demanded recognition of an independent West Papua state, it did not ask for any ransom money.

U.S. to reject North Korea's preconditions on proposed talks

SEOUL (R) — The United States ruled out Wednesday accepting preconditions North Korea might attach to proposed four-nation talks to secure peace on the Korean peninsula.

"We put forward this proposal without preconditions. So in our view, since there is no precondition on our side then, there should be no preconditions on their side," Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Winston Lord told a news conference.

"Clearly if we get into the talks, then issues like economic cooperation (with North Korea) and sanctions could be discussed, but we would have to get into the talks."

Mr. Lord headed U.S. delegates in this week's talks with Seoul and Tokyo in the South Korean island of Cheju to discuss North Korean issues.

After a two-day meeting, the United States, Japan and South Korea agreed there would be no immediate food aid for North Korea, which is reported to be suffering a serious food shortage.

Devastating floods destroyed crops in the North last year and left 100,000 families homeless. The United Nations has said North Korea's food crisis is likely to worsen in the near future.

U.S. President Bill Clinton and South Korean President Kim Young-Sam last month proposed four-party talks with North Korea and China to hammer out a peace treaty to replace the armistice agreement that ended the 1950-53 Korean War.

The secretive North has not yet given a reply to the talks proposal but has sought more details.

Analysts in South Korea said Wednesday the move to rule out food aid for North Korea would not be enough to push Pyongyang into mending ties with the South.

"The meeting by envoys from the United States, Japan and South Korea did not really come out with specific steps to help improve ties between U.S. and North Korea," said Kim Chang-Soon, head of the Institute of North Korean studies in Seoul.

Fyodorov urges Yeltsin to form coalition government

MOSCOW (AFP) — Presidential candidate and famous eye surgeon Vyacheslav Fyodorov called Wednesday on President Boris Yeltsin to form a coalition government including Communists and reformists to unite Russia's fractured society.

Mr. Yeltsin, who is seeking re-election in the June 16 polls, held talks with Dr. Fyodorov for an hour — the latest in a series of meetings the Russian leader has had with moderate presidential rivals aimed at persuading them to back his campaign.

Speaking to reporters, Dr. Fyodorov said he told Mr. Yeltsin that Russia's dire economic problems could "only be resolved by creating a national unity government, bringing together all political, economic and social forces."

"Boris Nikolayevich (Yeltsin) agreed with this and said such a government should be set up now," Dr. Fyodorov said.

Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman Sergei Medvedev confirmed that the Russian leader promised to examine the question of forming a national unity government, Interfax News Agency reported.

However, Mr. Yeltsin said he did not regard the idea as "totally practicable," especially in the short term, and it needed serious further work, Mr. Medvedev said.

Dr. Fyodorov said he told Mr. Yeltsin that the new government should be formed between the first round of the elections and the second round, set for July 7. "So it is clear who heads the executive authority," Dr. Fyodorov told reporters that "if such a government is formed and I am offered the

premiership, I am ready to take that post."

Mr. Yeltsin did not offer Dr. Fyodorov any government post and did not press him to withdraw his candidacy in the elections, Dr. Fyodorov said.

Mr. Yeltsin has also held individual talks with reformist Grigory Yavlinsky and nationalist General Alexander Lebed — two presidential candidates whom media reports suggested could team up with Dr. Fyodorov to form a "third force" in the elections to rival Mr. Yeltsin and Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov.

Dr. Fyodorov, who is campaigning on a socialist platform for collectives in which workers have a real stake in enterprises, rejected talk of a "third force" Wednesday.

"The issue is not one of a third force. What we need is a third way, not a path to criminal capitalism or totalitarian socialism, but a path to normal people's socialism or people's capitalism."

A leading polling institute, Visum, said Tuesday that for the first time since January Mr. Yeltsin's rating was better than Mr. Zyuganov's, with 28 per cent of respondents saying they were ready to vote for Mr. Yeltsin in the first round, compared with 27 per cent for Mr. Zyuganov.

The survey also found that 52 per cent expected Mr. Yeltsin to win, compared with only 14 per cent in January.

Mr. Yeltsin is expected to face Mr. Zyuganov in a second round runoff on July 7.

Stars gather for Cannes AIDS benefit

CANNES, France (AFP) — Elizabeth Taylor arrived in Cannes Wednesday for a star-studded AIDS benefit dinner due to be held on the Riviera Thursday evening.

Michael Jackson and Hugh Grant are expected to be among the guests at the dinner at the Moulin De Mougins Hotel overlooking Cannes, which Taylor has turned into an annual feature of the Cannes film-fest. "The fight against AIDS is the most important thing in my life. I hope this can make a contribution," said the actress.

Melanie Griffith marries Antonio Banderas

LONDON (R) — American actress Melanie Griffith married Spanish heart throb Antonio Banderas, the father of the child she is expecting in September, in a civil ceremony in London, the Sun newspaper said Wednesday.

Griffith, the 38-year-old star who was nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in the film Working Girl, exchanged vows with Banderas Tuesday in a 15-minute ceremony at London's Westminster Register Office. "They are desperately in love but wanted to marry without any fuss," the top selling newspaper quoted a friend of the couple as saying.

"Melanie looked stunning but wore a very simple outfit. Antonio grinned like a Cheshire cat throughout." No independent confirmation was immediately available.

Griffith, the ex-wife of the star of the Miami Vice television series Don Johnson, was visiting London while Banderas, 35, was working on a new film of the life of Evita Peron. The newspaper said her three children attended the ceremony.

Jilted lover reveals all in letters to entire village

TOTNES, England (AFP) — A man whose girlfriend left him took his revenge by sending letters to everyone in her home village detailing her sex life, a court heard here. Forty-year-old Michael Phelan pleaded guilty to sending letters with a message about former girlfriend Katherine Holmes, 23, which was indecent or grossly offensive, with the purpose of causing distress or anxiety to others. Mr. Phelan was fined £1,700 (\$2,500).

Dolph Lundgren to become Swedish TV presenter

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Actor Dolph Lundgren, the star of Hollywood action movies like Universal Soldier and Rocky IV, will become a TV presenter in Sweden for a 24-hour movie channel, Filmnet said Wednesday. The beefy 38-year-old Swede will introduce Filmnet's Saturday Night Features for three months starting in August. Lundgren has left the Hollywood scene to be in Sweden for a while — his wife, Anette Qviberg, just gave birth to the couple's first child, Ida, in Stockholm on April 29. Known for playing the tough guy on screen, the star seems to have softened since the big event.

All that glitters is not gold

PARIS (AFP) — French police have arrested two Romanians suspected of having sold 180 fake gold bars to an Egyptian businessman for 250,000 francs (\$50,000), police said Wednesday. They said they were still seeking two other suspects and that they had recovered 350 other fake gold bars. Police said one of the Romanians was already wanted in connection with a number of frauds perpetrated in European countries.

Behave yourself

By Jean-Claude Elias

The advent of the Internet and electronic mail has not only created a new addiction for computer freaks, it has also introduced a dire need for a new book of ethics and manners.

We're not talking here about the largely publicised aspect of pornographic or sexually explicit material available on networks in Europe or the USA. This is definitely a bigger problem than simple ethics and fortunately it does not reach nor does it threaten the network we are using in Jordan. Our concern is about elementary courtesy.

Last February I subscribed to the E-mail service available in the country via one of the local companies offering such service. I have noticed since that some users — a limited number I must say — often take a blunt approach when they try to get in touch with another user on the network whom they do not know before, or when they want to complain about certain aspects or problems that bother them. They seem to forget that "the other" is a human being (as opposed to a computer or a robot) and certainly a perfectly respectable person.

The well-established rules of courtesy that would make them talk or behave in a regulated manner in real life are forgotten when communication is established on a computer network. A psychologist would probably give a detailed explanation of such attitude — a reassuring feeling of anonymity, natural aggressiveness, and so on. The reasons here do not matter much. What is important is to teach these users the basic rules of the game.

Entering a chat on a PC network should not be much different from talking on the phone. But of course we've had the phone for some time now and we know — we're supposed to at least — how to behave when using it. The responsibility of teaching users is in the hands of the people in charge of the network. I acknowledge that I have



seen the "rules" I am suggesting here above, somewhere on the network. Alas I am not sure that everybody has read them. They should be sent separately, in the regular mail. Or better, they should be handed to the users when they subscribe, asking them to sign a copy for acknowledgement.

The lack of courtesy does not always consist of rude words or expressions. Sometimes it is simply sending plain messages to people who are not concerned. The network managers have repeatedly asked users to be careful and not to annoy others with the equivalent of "junk mail." Recently they went as far as to threaten to cancel the subscription of those who do not comply. A wise decision.

Part of the problem comes from the fact that many of those surfing on the network are very young people who are used to communicate mainly with their parents and their friends at school. For the time being the total population of E-mail and Internet users doesn't exceed 1,500 in Jordan. Therefore this does not constitute a serious difficulty, especially that things seem to have improved recently. However, with a growth expected to reach multiples of the current number in a year or two, it only makes sense to put things right where they must be from the very beginning.

You'll never walk alone

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

Go down to Petra and you will most certainly never walk alone. This is, of course, great news to those who are counting on the tourist revolution bringing in money to our cash-strapped economy.

It can however be a pain to the tourist hoping to explore the mystery and beauty of this rose red city on his or her own. Such a tourist, most likely to be a foreigner, cannot go into Petra without contracting the services of a local guide whose duties could include, according to the local Tourist Police spokesperson, doing a little bit more than the official tasks of a tourist guide. Hence the need by such a guide to be familiar with the basics of martial arts.

As revealing as this information is, it is not what this article is about. The point that has to be made is that, and according to the spokesperson mentioned above, a Jordanian will know exactly what it means to be a Jordanian when it comes to paying the entry fee at the gates of Petra.

These words came out of his mouth as if being a Jordanian is ultimately defined by the amount of money a Jordanian pays as a tourist in his or her own country. And this is what I would like to talk about here.

These past holidays, I had decided to do the quite natural thing of wanting to visit some of the splendours of my own country. I had foolishly believed that I, a Jordanian, would be met with both the courtesy and hospitality that I hear the Jordanian people are famous for. I had believed that the growing body of people employed in the prosperous tourism industry was out there to stretch a helping hand. The sad reality was that everyone was stretching out a hand, but only to help themselves every time to a little bit of my money.

My first encounter was with a bus driver who was not very happy about picking up a group of Jordanian tourists because he was expecting to be driving around with a bunch of blond tourists who would ultimately give him a big tip for driving the bus with his bare foot on the steering wheel.

Another encounter was with the local Tourist Police in Petra who were too busy looking after the needs of foreigners to bother with the growing moans of a bunch of Jordanian visitors.

The same goes for the tour guides who have to be trained far more strictly in the future. Such guides knew nothing other than scheming and cheating the very groups they were supposed to serve.

These are the same guides who sit down in their spare



time to have a couple of alcoholic drinks, eating specially prepared food, and having a few laughs, all at the expense of the travellers. These guides, who boast making over JD 1,000 a month, quote you the price of a tour of parts of Wadi Rum at JD 30 when at the same time, local Bedouins quote the price of JD 15. These are the same guides who show dumbness, surprise, and later anger when confronted with these numbers.

Things go on with the flashy young proprietor of the rest-house in Wadi Rum insulting his Jordanian visitors and accusing them of disturbing the peace of his own foreign guests. This is the same proprietor who orders Jordanians out of the resthouse at noon because he wants to vacate the place for the foreign visitors who are about to come. The same foreigners who continuously keep coming in bus loads to shove their money into this guy's pockets while the Bedouin residents of Wadi Rum have to make do with whatever pitiful amounts of cash come their way. And I have to point out here that while some people claim that these Bedouins are not at all poor, that some are in fact millionaires, this is not the place to get into a discussion about the local politics of Wadi Rum in light of the upcoming developments being assigned for the area.

These are only some of the stories that illustrated the reality of a visit to Petra and Rum by a group of young Jordanians. These have been extracts of their encounter with a corrupt system. A corrupt system where Jordanians are treated with utter disrespect by tour operators, tour guides, the Tourist Police, and the Rest houses' managers, while foreigners are treated like 'Gods' in the quest for money. How much longer can Jordanians be expected to put up with this is another question.

One more note goes out to those who promote Jordan abroad: Can we do something to rectify the conviction among foreigners who come here believing that Petra consists of nothing other than the 'Khaznah', the only part of Petra ever photographed and filmed for promotional purposes.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, May 16, 1996

| | | | |
|-------|--|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 3:00 | Aladdin | 10:00 | News In English |
| 3:30 | The New Three Stooges | 10:25 | The Bold & The Beautiful |
| 3:35 | NBA | 11:15 | Counterstrike |
| 4:35 | Pirates | | |
| 5:00 | News Flash | | |
| 5:01 | French Programme — Le Chat Perche | | |
| 5:30 | Varieties — Le Monde Est A Vous | | |
| 7:00 | Le Journal | | |
| 7:15 | Magazine — Archimede | 3:00 | Bonkers |
| 7:30 | News Headlines | 3:30 | Richie Rich |
| 7:35 | Carol And Company | 3:45 | Playabout |
| 8:00 | Taratar | 4:10 | Animals of the Mediterranean |
| 9:10 | Star Trek | 5:00 | News Flash |
| 10:00 | News In English | 5:01 | Children's Programme — Ordy |
| 10:25 | Feature Film — Johnny's Girl | 5:15 | Family Programme — L'Ecole Des Fans |
| 12:00 | Starring: Treat Williams & Mia Kirschner | 6:00 | Magazine — Thalassa |
| | My Two Wives (Comedy) | 7:00 | Le Journal |

Friday, May 17, 1996

| | | | |
|-------|---|-------|--|
| 3:00 | Iris — The Happy Professor | 3:00 | Bonkers |
| 3:20 | Pebbles And Bam Bam Show | 3:30 | Richie Rich |
| 3:45 | Bush School | 3:45 | Playabout |
| 3:55 | See How They Grow | 4:10 | Animals of the Mediterranean |
| 4:05 | Gillette World Sport Special | 5:00 | News Flash |
| 4:35 | Give Us A Clue | 5:01 | Children's Programme — Ordy |
| 5:00 | News Flash | 5:15 | Family Programme — L'Ecole Des Fans |
| 5:01 | French Programme — Le Chat Perche | 6:00 | Magazine — Thalassa |
| 5:30 | Telefilm — Les Faux Eereres | 7:00 | Le Journal |
| 7:00 | Le Journal | 7:15 | Magazine — Science |
| 7:15 | Magazine — Allo La Terre | 7:35 | The Arab Cup Winners' Cup Championship |
| 7:30 | News Headlines | 9:10 | 100 Years Of Capitalism In Korea |
| 7:35 | The Good Life | 10:00 | News In English |
| 8:00 | Nasty Boys | 10:25 | The Bold And The Beautiful |
| 8:45 | It Had To Be You | 11:10 | P.S. I Love u |
| 9:10 | The Hanging Gate | 11:55 | Taurus Risking |
| 10:00 | News In English | | |
| 10:25 | Classic Movie: "The V.I.P.s" | | |
| | Starring: Elizabeth Taylor & Richard Burton | | |

Saturday, May 18, 1996

| | | | |
|-------|--|------|--------------------------------------|
| 3:00 | Moomin | 3:00 | Iris |
| 3:30 | Pumpkin Patch | 3:20 | Captain Planet |
| 3:45 | Blue Heelers | 3:45 | Scientific eye |
| 4:35 | Big Brother Jake | 4:10 | The Bob Morrison Show |
| 5:00 | Flash News | 4:35 | Alf |
| 5:01 | French Programme — Ordy | 5:00 | News Flash |
| 5:15 | Document — La Vie Devant Moi | 5:01 | Children's Programme — Ordy |
| 5:30 | Document — L'Aventure Des Plantes | 5:15 | Document — La Vie Devant Moi |
| 6:00 | Serie — Chateau Vallon | 5:30 | Jeux — Que Le Meilleur Gagne |
| 7:00 | Le Journal | 6:00 | Medical Magazine — Savoir Plus Sante |
| 7:15 | Magazine — Faut Pas Rever | 7:00 | Le Journal |
| 7:35 | The Arab Cup Winners' Cup Championship | 7:15 | Magazine |
| | | | Ushuaia |
| 9:10 | Prism | 7:35 | Encounter |
| 9:40 | News In English | | Producer: Rami Khouri |
| 10:00 | Eurovision Song Contest '96 | 8:00 | Home Improvement |
| | Live From Oslo | 8:25 | Life In The Freezer |

Sunday, May 19, 1996

| | | | |
|------|------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| 3:00 | The Flintstones | 3:00 | The Flintstones |
| 3:30 | Bush School | 3:30 | Dinosaurs |
| 3:45 | Mac & Muthy | 3:55 | The New 3 Stooges |
| 4:10 | Italian Soccer | 4:00 | Bill Nye The Science Guy |
| 5:00 | Flash News | 4:30 | Alex Mac |
| 5:01 | French Programme — Ordy | 5:00 | News Flash |
| 5:15 | Document — La Vie Devant Moi | 5:01 | Children's Programme — Le Chat Perche |
| 5:30 | Jeux — Que Le Meilleur Gagne | 5:30 | Serie — Maigret Et La Vieille Dame |
| 6:00 | Magazine — Envoye Special | 7:00 | Le Journal |
| 7:00 | Le Journal | 7:15 | Magazine — Sports Et Musiqui |
| 7:15 | Magazine — Sports Et Musiqui | 7:35 | Evening Shade |
| 7:35 | Cinema, Cinema, Cinema | 8:00 | Computer Chronicles |
| 8:00 | The American Chart Show | 8:30 | Changer |
| 8:45 | The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air | 9:10 | UEFA Champions League At Final |
| 9:10 | Blackie's Majic | 10:00 | News In English |
| | | 10:25 | Second Half Of The Match |
| | | 11:10 | Airwolf |
| | | 11:55 | Are you being served |

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By: Mohammad A. Shuqair

STRANGE SUPERSTITIONS

GOOSE: If people, in North Africa, wanted to lead a happy and peaceful life, they had to sacrifice a goose and eat it.

MAX: He who married in May was probably liable to have no children. If he hadn't had or kept three grains of salt, it was feared that he would have been struck by poverty.

PARIS: This city will one day disappear amidst the waves. The reason for this is that the word "Par", which is a Latin word, means "Like" and "Ys" or "Is" also means the name of the capital of Brittany that had been swallowed up in the 4th or 5th century.

SIGHT: To have or keep a strong sight all the year round, you should eat three fresh raw carrots. To carry an emerald on you, this would result in a doubled vision.

SPIT: We spit.....
— when we swear.
— to show we are telling the truth.
— to avoid the evil eyes.
— to summon fortune when we need it.
— in our right shoe to achieve a happy journey.
— on hairs we lose so as to let the devil go on his way without giving him the least chance to do any harm to us.
— on the nail bits after been immediately trimmed in order not to be submitted to the witches' charm and authority.
— in a toad's mouth in case we have toothache on a full-moon night.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

**** Shell these eggs.**
Qa'shir hathal bayd.

**** Make shift with what a little you have.**
Iqtani bil 'qafil allathi endaka.

**** Take off your shoes.**
Ikhlal hittha'aka.

**** Don't turn a cold shoulder to your friends.**
La tahjor asdika'aka.

**** Don't use hasty words.**
La tanfa'il fil kalam.

**** Be easy, you will find one who boots you.**
Etma'in, wa satajid man ya'mal ma feehi maslahatok.

**** Don't stand against your superiors.**
La to'aamid ru'asa'aka.

**** Drop this letter in the post office box, please.**
Da'hathahir rissalah fee sondookil bareed min fadlik.

JOKES

*** HOUSE OWNER:** "It seems that your friend is waiting for you behind the house."

MAID: "How did you come to know he is my friend?"

HOUSE OWNER: "Because he's wearing one of my lost shirts."

*** A YOUNG man once visited his uncle who said,**
"Do you want the servant to awaken you?"

"Thank you, uncle. I always wake up at six."
"Well, don't forget to arouse the servant at this time, please."

*** Fatma's husband died suddenly. A friend of hers came to console her.** "Did your husband really die after he had fallen down from the window?"

"Yes."
"What was he doing at that time?"
"He was trying to hang himself."

PUZZLES

(A) WORD MAKING

How many words can you make from the word

PANTOMIME

(B) At the Cowham "Palais de Danse" one night, five men and their five wives danced. Mr. Archer danced with the wife of Mrs. Dunne's partner. Mrs. Eaves danced with the wife of Mrs. Archer's partner. Mr. Caley was stepping it out with the wife of Mrs. Beech's partner, while Mr. Dunne was treading a measure with Mr. Eaves.

Who was dancing with Mr. Beech?

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

(1) Name five famous books which were written in prison.

(2) What is the usual weight of a new-born baby, a bacon pig, a two-year-old steer, a 14-foot crocodile and an association football?

(3) In what games or sports do the following players take part? Pitcher, third one, elder hand, skip, cox, left inner, fly-half, welter-weight, spot, end.

(4) What are the English names of the following towns? Wein, Munchen, Anvers, Venezia, Firenze, Vavsovie, Livorno, Genova, Daugovpils, Wilno.



Rescue workers wearing protective clothing carry a body bag from an aircraft near the scene of the ValuJet Flight 592 crash. Rescue officials say 109 persons died in the crash which occurred in Florida's Everglades on May 11 (Reuters photo)

ValuJet probe focuses on possible cargo blast

MIAMI (R) — Some passengers on ValuJet Flight 592 were likely thrown violently around the cabin when the plane suddenly lost power and plunged to earth after what may have been an explosion in the cargo hold, according to data being analysed Wednesday.

Robert Francis, vice chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), said the flight data recorder showed that the jet with 109 aboard was climbing normally after take-off from Miami when the problems began.

"There could have been an explosion," Mr. Francis told reporters on Tuesday evening.

Of particular interest to investigators, he said, were some 50 to 60 spare oxygen generators being transported in the cargo hold back to ValuJet's headquarters in Atlanta for refurbishing. Oxygen is highly flammable.

The oxygen generators are used for passengers' oxygen masks in emergencies. Each is the size of a fire extinguisher.

About 31/2 minutes before the Saturday crash the right engine lost 45 per cent of its power and the DC-9 began to tumble out of control, according to preliminary data.

"The altitude dropped 815 feet (248 metres)," Mr. Francis said. "This last-

ed between 3 and 4 seconds." After the left engine lost power, the plane slammed nose-first into the spongy mud of the everglades.

An airplane typically descends at a rate of about 400 feet (122 metres) per minute, according to experienced commercial pilots. A fall of twice that in less than four seconds would have tossed passengers or flight attendants against the aircraft's ceiling if they were not strapped into their seats.

Mr. Francis emphasised that the flight data collected so far was preliminary and would be analysed further by NTSB engineers and scientists. He said it was also significant that the final 50 seconds of the flight data was missing.

Details about the flight's final minutes were of little comfort to the families of the victims, who have waited helplessly since the jet crashed Saturday afternoon.

Scores of grieving families were to visit the crash site for the first time on Wednesday for a memorial service. The relatives will be escorted by bus to the alligator-infested swamp to pray, meditate and place flowers at the site.

So far dozens of small body parts have been found among the wreckage but medical experts said it could take weeks to identify the remains. Dental records, heart pacemakers and small

tattoos or birthmarks may be the only way that some of the victims can be identified, they said.

Workers planned to resume their grisly search for body parts, plane fragments and the cockpit voice recorder at dawn.

Because of the decomposing bodies, toxic aviation fuel and rampant bacteria, searchers must wear special plastic suits and face masks to protect themselves from the fetid waters.

The crews are hosed down with water and bleach after completing each 30-minute search shift. While wading through the matted vines and mud, a police marksman stands guard with an automatic weapon in case of an alligator attack.

Since the accident questions have arisen about the safety of budget U.S. carriers such as ValuJet, which has grown rapidly by buying older airplanes since it was founded in 1993.

The White House said Tuesday that the FAA was taking immediate steps to improve air safety, including accelerating hiring of 100 additional safety inspectors.

The DC-9 jet that crashed had been forced to return to the airport gate on a half-dozen occasions in the past two years and a mechanic had been summoned for last-minute repairs to fuel pump circuit-breakers on the day of its final flight.

Bangladesh tornado death toll could top 1,000

TANGAIL, Bangladesh (AFP) — The Bangladesh authorities were making desperate efforts Wednesday to find survivors of a devastating tornado which left some 500 people dead and hundreds missing.

The Tangail district office put the number of confirmed dead at 456 but local leaders and officials in the worst-hit villages said the final toll could exceed 1,000 dead. Around 10,000 people were seriously injured.

Caretaker government chief Mohammad Habibur Rahman, facing his worst crisis since taking office on March 30, toured the worst-hit areas around Tangail, a cotton-weaving district 100 kilometres from Dhaka.

Mr. Rahman has ordered army reinforcements into the district to help those already hastily digging graves for the recovered bodies to avoid the spread of disease after Monday's storm flattened four villages.

One local official told AFP: "Many people are still buried under the rubble or are unaccounted for so far, and we fear they are dead."

Aid workers said large number of families were wiped out and in many cases only one or two members survived, and they were without shelter.

In Bashail and Gopalpur sub-districts, corpses could be seen in the

branches of trees that were not toppled by the savage winds.

Tin sheets from rooftops were twisted and scattered and it was feared that more dead would be found beneath the debris.

Narain Babu, a farmer in Mirikpur village, described the force of the tornado, which packed winds of around 150 kilometres an hour — strong enough to turn rice paddy seeds into flying "spikes."

"The seeds hit many of us like spikes when the wind swept over our village," Mr. Babu said.

An eight-year-old boy, Lipu, broke his hip when he was blasted by the seeds, turned into flying bullets by the freak winds.

Mr. Rahman, who is in charge of organising national elections on June 12, has ordered the army and civil administration to mobilise its entire machinery and resources to help the victims.

He ordered local officials to redouble efforts for the victims.

"We want to stand by the victims with all our strength," added Mr. Rahman, who gave a warning of strong action against anyone caught pilfering aid materials.

Tangail's administrative chief Abdul Satar Khan said 425 bodies had been

buried so far and predicted the death toll would rise.

He said 65,000 people were affected, 9,855 of them seriously injured, and 25,000 homes destroyed in six sub-districts.

The Japanese government offered to send an emergency rescue team and other forms of assistance.

Officials said food and medicine was slowly reaching the victims, many still living in the open.

Defence sources said troops were being reinforced and 12 army medical units and 35 government teams, were working around the clock in the affected villages. A large number of the seriously injured victims were being treated at a military hospital.

Local volunteers were working with members of the Red Crescent and students.

Political leaders, Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed and former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, toured the district Wednesday and their supporters distributed aid to victims.

Meteorologists have warned Bangladesh could be hit by more storms until June. In 1991, the country's worst storm in 40 years killed more than 139,000 people and devastated crops and property.

BJP leader named Indian premier

NEW DELHI (R) — India's Hindu nationalist leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee was named prime minister Wednesday as a rival leftist bid to rule the world's biggest democracy following indecisive elections was turned aside.

President Shankar Dayal Sharma gave Mr. Vajpayee of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) — which won just two seats in parliament in 1994 elections — until May 31 to prove a majority in the deeply split parliament.

To do so, he will have to pass a vote of confidence. If he loses it, India's first Hindu nationalist government will fall.

"The president has appointed me as the prime minister and my council of ministers will take oath tomorrow," Mr. Vajpayee told reporters at the red sandstone presidential palace after a 30-minute meeting with Mr. Sharma.

"I have accepted the invitation," said Mr. Vajpayee, foreign minister in one of modern India's few non-Congress Party governments that lasted from 1977 to 1979.

The president's office said Mr. Vajpayee, 69 and one of India's most gifted orators, would be sworn in at 12 noon (0630 GMT) Thursday.

Mr. Sharma's choice ended a week of frantic jockeying by the three main political groupings after polls left all of them well short of an outright majority.

But it remained unclear whether the BJP and its allies, which have 195 seats in the 545-member parliament,

would be able to muster enough support to win a no-confidence vote.

The National Front-Left Front (NF-LF), the rival claimant to power, says it commands 180 seats.

Caretaker Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress, which crashed to an unprecedented election defeat and promised conditional support to an NF-LF government, has 136. Regional parties and independents hold 92.

The BJP says the magnet of power, which Mr. Vajpayee now has, will attract support from the regional parties, many of which have said they want an NF-LF government.

Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil told reporters his party it would vote against Mr. Vajpayee in the vote of no-confidence. If the NF-LF holds together and the regional parties remain loyal, the Vajpayee's government has little chance of survival.

"It will be an eight-day wonder," Mr. Gadgil said.

The NF-LF would then seek to form a government and go through the same procedure.

Mr. Vajpayee's appointment came only minutes after Congress announced it would back a bid for power by the NF-LF, a loose coalition of centre-left and Communist parties.

The BJP's perceived anti-Muslim bias has galvanised other disparate parties which say its policies favouring the Hindu majority could stoke religious tensions in a national of 930

million people, some 110 of them Muslims.

The BJP rode a wave of support in the late 1980s when it campaigned for the construction of a Hindu temple on the site of a 16th century mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya.

Hindu extremists, using crude tools and their bare hands, tore down the mosque in December 1992, sparking nationwide riots in which more than 3,000 people, mostly Muslims, were killed.

The prospect of a BJP government thrust together the left and Congress, who otherwise love to disagree.

The BJP has pledged to deploy the atomic bomb. India exploded a nuclear device in 1974 but says it never built an atomic weapon.

Foreign experts believe both India and its arch-rival Pakistan, which have fought three wars since independence in 1947, could both quickly assemble nuclear weapons.

The BJP has said it would continue the free-market economic policies which Mr. Rao's government introduced, rolling back more than four decades of socialist controls.

Financial markets have generally looked more favourably on the prospects of a BJP-led government than one led by the left.

But the BJP, whose name means Indian People's Party, has said it would restrict foreign investment in the consumer goods sector.

Gibraltar polls point to change

GIBRALTAR (R) — Gibraltar seems likely to get a new leadership after elections Thursday, according to the latest opinion poll, and a loosening of ties with Britain whoever wins.

The tiny British colony on Spain's southern coast is set for a turbulent period, with all local parties promising to review links with Britain and a new conservative government in Spain warning it will be much tougher over its sovereignty claim.

The latest poll by Gibraltar Services, published Wednesday and in line with earlier surveys, puts Chief Minister Joe Bossano's ruling Socialist Labour Party (GSLP) in second place behind the conservative Social Democrats (GSD).

With between 47.5 and 50 per cent of votes, the Social Democrats would take eight of the 15 seats in the colony's House of Assembly, leaving MR. Bossano — fighting to retain power after eight years in office — with just seven, the poll said.

But local commentators warned that an upset could not be entirely ruled out, with the veteran Bossano, his GSD rival Peter Carrana and minority National Party leader Joseph Garcia due to slug it out in a televised eve-of-poll debate.

The rocky outcrop with just 30,000 people at the western entrance to the Mediterranean has been ruled by Britain for nearly three centuries and is claimed by Spain.

Disputes over the colony, including an angry outburst last month when a Spanish Civil Guard helicopter chasing suspected Gibraltar-based drug smugglers crashed into the sea, killing one officer, have long cast a shadow over Anglo-Spanish links.

Mr. Bossano, who has strong working class support, has pledged to push for decolonisation without ceding sovereignty to Spain.

Under the treaty which gave Gibraltar to Britain in 1713, the rock would return to Spain if Britain no longer wanted it.

To prevent this, Mr. Bossano is proposing "free association" which would give Britain responsibility for defence but return control over most other areas to Gibraltar's House of Assembly.

But Mr. Bossano has been hurt politically by unprecedented rioting last month that began after pressure from London and Madrid forced him to clamp down on the Gibraltar-based speedboats used to smuggle drugs between Morocco and Spain.

Hong Kong deports more boatpeople

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong sent another group of more than 100 Vietnamese boatpeople back home Wednesday as it moved to quell the prospect of further violence in its detention camps.

Wednesday's repatriation of 124 boat people was the second in a series of forced evictions of about 600 people planned for this month alone — Hong Kong's biggest ever deportation programme.

Most of the 48 men, 39 women, and 37 children returned in the latest repatriation flight were from North Vietnam and had languished in prison-like detention camps for seven years.

A group of 118 boat people was flown back to Vietnam Tuesday, with three more flights planned later this month.

There had been no further disturbances at the Whitehead Detention Centre, the scene of fiery riots and a mass breakout late last week, a government source told Reuters Wednesday.

About 200 inmates who had staged a peaceful rooftop demonstration Tuesday, against their pending repatriation had ended their protest, the source said.

The government remains undeterred in plans to clear its detention camps of some 18,000 boat people before Hong Kong reverts to Chinese sovereignty in mid-1997.

Police Tuesday scoured the fire-blackened Whitehead Camp for homemade weapons. They said thousands of weapons,

including spears, clubs and saws, were later confiscated.

Fire trucks were stationed outside the barbed wire perimeter and helicopters circled overhead keeping close watch on the rooftop protesters.

Thirty-five boat people, deemed troublemakers by authorities, were taken to separate camps for questioning about last week's violence.

Police would press charges against those responsible for the mayhem if sufficient evidence was found, a government source added.

About 50 police and prison officers were injured in the rioting and pitched battles which erupted Friday when boat people torched buildings and vehicles before forcing their way through high security fences in a short-lived bid for freedom.

Riot police used more than 1,800 rounds of tear gas to repel waves of rioters armed with home-made spears and clubs fashioned from metal pipes. Most of the more than 100 boat people who escaped have now been rounded up.

Some 30,000 Vietnamese boat people languish in camps across Asia, more than half of them in Hong Kong.

All but a handful have been judged to be economic migrants seeking a better life rather than refugees fleeing persecution, making them ineligible for asylum and resettlement.

U.S., Canada and Europe begin review of CFE arms treaty

VIENNA (R) — Delegates from Europe, the United States and Canada opened a key conference Wednesday to review a European arms treaty, seeking fresh commitments to cap weapons and troops around the continent.

Talks on the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty, considered an anchor of post-cold war security, were convened to allow signatory states a chance to consider whether the pact was operating smoothly.

The United States said it wanted to avoid getting bogged down in complex issues, in particular Russia's demands for changes to "flank limitations" — the amount of military hardware states are permitted to station on their borders.

"The U.S. goal at the conference is to secure a strong endorsement of the treaty — a statement agreed to by all parties that says the treaty has been a success...and will remain the cornerstone of European security," U.S. delegation head Thomas Graham said in comments released by U.S. diplomats.

"We would very much prefer that the actual substance of the flank issue not be brought directly into the conference because it would leave us little time to do anything else," he added.

But U.S. officials acknowledge that Russia's uneasiness over treaty limits on frontier strength, in particular on its southern fringe near the volatile Caucasus region, will be discussed at some point during the conference.

The conference, which will split up into working groups for most of the two-week session and is closed to the media, ends on May 31.

Most signatory states have pointed to what they call the undoubted success of the pact at reducing the numbers of conventional arms from the Atlantic to the Urals.

More than 50,000 pieces of military equipment have been destroyed in the three-year reduction period which ended last November. The total includes nearly 19,000 battle tanks, 18,000 armoured combat vehicles, and thousands of pieces of artillery, combat aircraft and attack helicopters.

Russia is in technical violation of the CFE pact by failing to meet its weapons cuts obligations by the November deadline. Armenia and Azerbaijan, in dispute over the region of Nagorno-Karabakh, have also yet to meet arms reduction limits.

Russia, which has argued the treaty is outdated and was negotiated at a time of

the old East-West divide, is expected to push for a commitment to a new, modernised arms accord during the conference.

Diplomats said Moscow's request was likely to find backing from most delegates who recognise that the disintegration of Warsaw Pact and the collapse of the Soviet Union have created a new geographical and strategic map of Europe which has to be addressed in an updated arms document.

"The United States...is prepared, provided the flank issue is resolved, to initiate a process at the review conference which will lead ultimately toward the modernisation of the treaty to reflect changed realities," said Mr. Graham, President Bill Clinton's special envoy on arms control and disarmament.

Officials of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), said the conference could end with a firm commitment to an updated CFE pact. The treaty was negotiated under the auspices of the European Security Forum.

"There are lots of possibilities for package deals. The whole thing could be done in the next three days...a kind of big package," an OSCE official said.

Greenpeace ship sets sail for China protest

AUCKLAND (R) — The environmental protest ship Greenpeace set sail Wednesday for Shanghai to protest over China's continued refusal to stop nuclear testing.

The ship, which has been overhauled after being confiscated by France last year for its part in Greenpeace protests at the French nuclear test site at Mururoa Atoll, was escorted from its berth by two inflatable craft.

The Greenpeace's first stop is Sydney. It then sails to Manila before arriving in Shanghai on or around June 10 in a bid to hasten nuclear test ban talks currently under way in Geneva.

The U.N.-sponsored forum aims to reach a comprehensive test ban treaty by June 28 so the text can

be sent to the United Nations General Assembly for signing in September.

"China could decide to stop testing between now and when the ship arrives, so your guess is as good as mine about how they are going to respond," Greenpeace Campaign Director Stephanie Mills told a news conference.

Ms. Mills cited Japanese press reports as saying that China plans to conduct its 44th nuclear test at Lop Nor, in the Xinjiang region, west of Beijing, in late May or early June.

If allowed to berth in Shanghai, the activists plan to meet officials and hold open days during a six-day stay. Greenpeace members were last year detained for 30 hours and then deported after staging a protest at

Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

Ms. Mills said Greenpeace rejected the concept of "peaceful" testing as advanced by China.

"In terms of verification, this is like a hole as wide as a bulldozer for a treaty because the information from a peaceful nuclear explosion is obviously just as useful to the military as a military test is," she said.

Ms. Mills said China had said it planned three or four more tests before it was willing to stop. "There are big problems still with the treaty negotiations themselves, and there is of course the risk that China will test imminently."

She said the trip was aimed at raising the debate internationally and within China but that there were no

plans to try and attempt a visit to Lop Nor.

China said Monday that it was willing to show "flexibility" on its demand that a nuclear test ban treaty allow "peaceful" explosions, provided other nuclear weapon states also gave ground in the Geneva talks.

Sha Zukang, China's ambassador to the disarmament conference, said in Geneva that Beijing backed a plan to wrap up the 38-state negotiations by June 28 with a global pact banning nuclear weapons' explosions underground.

Asked about the Greenpeace mission, Mr. Sha said: "I would discourage it — it is a waste of money and energy. We are in favour of the objectives of Greenpeace."

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By Benjamin Kang Lim
Reuter

BEIJING — More than a
year after the Chinese gov-
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advertising, the Marlboro
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crazed nation.

Smoking is banned in
public places in the capital
Beijing from Wednesday,
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Weekender

Jordan Times, Thursday, May 16, 1996 **A**

Society on the Move

The proof's in the pudding

Only a week after a national conference on journalism discussed, as one of its topics, the ethics of the profession, one controversial tabloid locked horns with Minister of Information Marwan Muasher. The tabloid last week, in a headline on its front page, quoted Dr. Muasher as saying that Jordan had asked the U.S. to fly planes over southern Iraq. When the minister protested that he was misquoted, the reporters said they had a tape recording to prove their case. Dr. Muasher challenged the reporters of the weekly to replay the tape at the next press briefing, which was subsequently held Monday. Meanwhile, the paper published another headline saying that it accepted the minister's challenge and would prove him wrong. Prior to Monday's briefing Dr. Muasher received a call from the reporters in question admitting that the minister had not made the statement as they reported it. Dr. Muasher responded that he would still like them to come to the briefing and play the tape, not to aggravate the situation but to clear the matter up. The reporters agreed. At Monday's briefing, before playing the tape, the minister told the reporters present, including the unprecedented number from the tabloid in question (about 10), that generally he would not feel compelled to conduct such a test. But because his credibility should never be in doubt, and that although he may not reveal everything he knows to the press, what he does reveal should be the truth, he believed the best route to take was to have all present listen to the tape. The recording revealed that Dr. Muasher said, "These planes have been flying over Iraq for the last five years. The new element about this is that Jordan wanted to benefit from the U.S. training of Jordanian pilots and upgrade its facilities. Therefore, Jordan asked these planes to fly." At that, and having been proved in error, the tabloid reporters charged that the minister "meant" to say that Jordan asked for U.S. planes to fly over southern Iraq. Dr. Muasher returned saying that they, as journalists, have the right to say that the minister meant to say "over southern Iraq," but they do not have the right to say "the minister said over southern Iraq." Suddenly, as if on cue, the entire representation of the weekly walked out of the briefing. So much for "truth or consequences" and ethics and etiquette.

DOING DOWNTOWN: Queen Sofia of Spain, who arrived in Amman several days early to inaugurate with Her Majesty Queen Noor an exhibition of Spanish con-

temporary art at Darat Al Funun and to attend a meeting of the International Steering Committee on the Economic Advancement of Rural Women, had a bit of free time on her hands. Having been to Jordan several times, the Spanish queen, accompanied by two members of her delegation and Spanish Ambassador to Jordan Juan Manuel Cabrera, visited Amra Castle on the road to Azraq and returned to Amman to see the Citadel and tour its museum. The queen then expressed an interest in seeing a bit of real Jordanian life. To that Mr. Cabrera suggested Hashimieh Square in downtown Amman. There Queen Sofia walked through the ruins, toured the two museums by the amphitheatre and stopped in several antique and artifacts shops where proprietors and customers recognized her and quickly moved to have their pictures taken with her. Later, had you been walking by at the time, you may just have missed the Queen of Spain sipping Turkish coffee at one of the outdoor argileh/coffee shops along the square — so relaxed and at ease was she.

FROM AUSTRALIA TO JORDAN BY WAY OF OVID: Prominent Australian literary figure David Malouf is due in Jordan Friday to launch the first of his books to be translated into Arabic — "An Imaginary Life," published in 1989. The idea to translate the Malouf novel was that of Fuhia Saudi, a paediatrician and proprietor of Al Mada, a small local publishing firm. Dr. Saudi took the book, in which the Roman poet Ovid tells of his life in exile and of his encounter with a wild boy raised among wolves, to Iraqi poet Saadi Yousef for translation. With permission from the author, the book was brought to life again in Arabic and is being launched this week. Born in Brisbane, Mr. Malouf, 62, a poet and novelist, is of Lebanese descent on his paternal side and English roots on his maternal side. The winner of several Australian and global literary awards, Mr. Malouf has taught at the University of Sydney, and his work is required reading for many students of literature. During his 10-day visit he will lecture at the English departments of some of Jordan's universities, meet with Minister of Culture Ahmad Qudrah and hold talks at the Amman Baccalaureate School where "An Imaginary Life" is part of the curriculum. Australian Ambassador Merry Wickes is hosting a reception at her residence where intellectuals, journalists and other friends of the embassy will have an opportunity to meet Mr. Malouf and perhaps get a signed copy of his novel.

FOR SILVER SCREEN JUNKIES: On Sunday, film buffs will have 10 days of European Film Festival to enjoy. The festival is held under the patronage of HRH Princess Sarvath Al Hassan, and all proceeds from the nominal entrance fees will go to benefit the Centre for Special Education of the Young Muslim Women's Association. The 10 films are products of Italy, the Netherlands, the U.K., Germany, France, Sweden, Belgium, Spain and Greece. As Italy holds the current presidency of the European Union, the first screening will be of the Italian flick Caro Diario (Dear Diary). All showings will be at the Prince Hassan Auditorium at the University of Jordan at 8:00 p.m., with a second screening each following day at 5:00 p.m.

WALK FOR WOMEN: The recently established Amman Rotary Cosmopolitan Club will see one of its first and most important projects take to the road this weekend when on Friday thousands of health activists are expected to turn out for the March Against Breast Cancer under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor. The march, organised with steering help from Rafiq Hamameh of the Petra Rotary Club, is held to raise funds to match a grant from Rotary International to purchase a mobile mammography machine. Such a facility will provide free breast examinations to women in underprivileged areas around the country and will help in the early detection of breast cancer. Funds will also be used to publish and distribute public awareness brochures on breast cancer and the importance of self-examination and mammography. Head of the Cosmopolitan Club's Community Development Committee Nawar Fariz, a radio diagnostic consultant, said early



Students from the Ahliya School for Girls perform a ballet at a celebration of the school's 70th anniversary and the anniversary of Jordan's independence. The celebration was attended by Ahliya School alumni HRH Princess Alia Al Faisal

detection gives a woman a better chance at beating breast cancer. Dr. Fariz estimates that in Jordan 350 new cases of the disease are recorded annually. The march, she said, will serve to open the subject to more people so that more women can help themselves. Other participants in the "Help Us Fight Breast Cancer" campaign are the Jordan Armed Forces Band, the Civil Defence and Police Departments, Royal Jordanian, Al Rai, Al Dustour and Al Aswaq newspapers, Arab Bank, Jordan Gulf Bank, Jordan National Bank, the Industrial Development Bank, Alja Buses, Aramex, Fast Link, National Paints, Al Kowther and Al Ghadeer. Lace up your walking shoes and be at the Amra Hotel for the start signal scheduled to go off at 8:30 A.M.

Jennifer Hamarneh

China's tobacco industry shrugs off smoking ban

By Benjamin Kang Lim
Reuter

BEIJING — More than a year after the Chinese government banned cigarette advertising, the Marlboro Man remains very much in the game in this soccer-crazed nation.

Smoking is banned in public places in the capital Beijing from Wednesday,

but the move is unlikely to

dent revenues for the state tobacco monopoly, the country's largest tax generator.

"It will have some impact, but it won't be big," said Zhou Ruizeng, director of the Foreign Affairs Office of the cabinet's State Tobacco Monopoly Administration.

The power of China's tobacco administrators was evident when sponsors of

the Marlboro League splashed a full-page, colour advertisement in the April 26 edition of the Sichuan Daily.

In a gesture to the advertising ban, Marlboro Man has been transformed from a stetson-wearing cowboy to a red-and-white logo of a footballer who dribbles across giant banners and billboards in stadiums across China. The millions of fans

and television viewers know exactly who he is.

Philip Morris Cos Inc's Marlboro is not alone in China's cash-strapped sporting world. RJR Nabisco Holdings Corp's Salem sponsored a tennis tournament last year, while 555 bankrolled the Hong Kong-Beijing Car Rally.

In Beijing, the fine for people who smoke in hospitals, libraries, museums, schools, stadiums, cinemas and on public transport will be just 10 yuan (\$1.20) — less than the price of a pack of foreign cigarettes. It will hardly make a dent.

China has 300 million smokers, comprising 25 per cent of the world's total, and they burn 1.64 trillion cigarettes a year.

There is still plenty of room for growth. "We are targeting the 40 million people who still smoke pipes or roll their own," Mr. Zhou said, puffing casually during an interview.

China's 180 factories produce almost 900 brands. Prices range from 0.6 yuan (\$0.07) for a pack of five Golden Flowers to 110 yuan (\$13.25) for a pack of Yunyans (Cloud Smoke), whose packaging includes an anti-piracy hologram.

It has been estimated that the number of smokers in China will rise by two per cent a year. Between 1985 and 1992, cigarette consumption surged by 20 per cent.

A 1993 survey showed 61.01 per cent of men aged over 15 smoked and that 75 per cent of those over 25 were addicted.

"It's hard not to smoke when almost three out of four people around you smoke," said a chain-smoking driver who has tried to quit several times, without success.

Smoking is deeply ingrained in Chinese society. "Smoking is a status symbol," anti-smoking campaigner Zhang Yifang said.

"Many have the wrong impression that smoking



A Beijing cigarette vendor poses in front of his street stall while sampling one of his wares. Beijing's anti-smoking lobby campaigners say that by the year 2025 two million Chinese are expected to die yearly from smoking-related diseases (Reuter photo)

makes one attractive and admired," said Mr. Zhang, secretary general of the Chinese Association on Smoking and Health.

The tobacco monopoly's Zhou described it as a Chinese "virtue" to offer cigarettes to others and said a smoker would be seen as stingy if he failed to do so.

China's leaders send differing signals. The late Chairman Mao Tsetong and paramount leader Deng Xiaoping were chain smokers, often photographed with a cigarette in hand.

However, Deng gave up cigarettes a few years ago and Premier Li Peng in March banned smoking in the Great Hall of the People where Chinese leaders hold their major conferences.

Despite the premier's anti-smoking stance and the ban on public smoking in Beijing, China is not about to snuff out the tobacco industry, which generated 71 billion yuan (\$8.6 billion) in profits and taxes in 1995. It was the state's single largest source of tax revenues for the ninth consecutive year.

But the tobacco industry is not without problems. Up to 40 per cent of its 2,000 state enterprises face financial difficulties and are to be merged into 100 pillar firms by 2000, said the state tobacco monopoly's Zhou.

The monopoly will not allow new Sino-foreign cigarette joint ventures because production capacity out-

strips demand, he said. There are currently three such ventures.

Smuggling is another headache, slashing government revenues by 15 billion yuan (\$1.8 billion) a year. "Imported cigarettes are not a big threat. We're not afraid of opening up," Mr. Zhou said.

By contrast, the anti-smoking lobby faces an uphill battle. By the year 2025, two million Chinese a year are expected to die from smoking and related diseases, campaigners say.

Smoking costs China more in early deaths, lost productivity and medical costs than it gains in tax revenue, they say. But many do not know, or do not believe, smoking harms health.

"The harmful effect of smoking is exaggerated," Mr. Zhou said.

Qi Weicheng, vice-director of the Beijing Cigarette Factory, likened tobacco to car exhaust fumes, saying: "We can't ban smoking because it harms health just like we can't ban cars because car exhaust is bad for the health."

Someone who should perhaps have tried his herbal Zhongnanhai cigarettes was a 19-year-old in the northern city of Tianjin.

The unidentified man won a bet with a friend after puffing 100 cigarettes in one sitting. The Today's Evening News said. He paid with his life moments later when his heart gave out.



A worker on the production line of the Beijing Cigarette Factory checks to prevent jamming as filtered cigarettes are lined up for insertion into packets. China's tobacco industry generated 71 billion yuan (\$8.6 billion) in profits and taxes in 1995 but the anti-smoking lobby claims that smoking costs China more in early deaths, lost productivity and medical costs than it gains from tax revenue (Reuter photo)

Roger Moore finds delight in playing villain in The Quest

By Bob Thomas
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Roger Moore came to the decision when he would call for dinner reservations and maitre d's started responding: "Roger who? Would you spell it, please?"

double-O-seven had fallen to obscurity purgatory.

"I realise that working with UNICEF, my value is that I am well known," said the star of seven James Bond films. "When I started hearing that on the telephone, I said, 'uh-oh, I'd better make another movie.'"

So he did. He co-stars with Jean-Claude Van Damme in *The Quest*, which the Belgian muscle man also directed. Moore plays a former British navy officer turned pirate and con man, who sponsors Van Damme in a tournament of the best fighters of countries around the world.

Van Damme personally delivered a script to Moore at his home in Gstaad, Switzerland. Moore agreed to the film, partly because he wouldn't be called on for the action stuff.

"That was the beauty of it," Moore commented smugly. "Also, not playing the hero, I realised I did

not have to be there every day. I was doing what I had always envied in every film I've done.

"I was always the hero, and I envied the villain, who invariably had the best lines and didn't have to be there every day, didn't have to spend two hours in the makeup chair getting rid of wrinkles. In this one I grew a beard, and it didn't matter whether my eyes were puffy. Wonderful."

Born in London, the son of a policeman, Moore studied painting at an art school, then moved to drama at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. He played a few small roles in theatre and films before his army duty. He resumed his career and migrated to Hollywood at a time when American films welcomed British actors.

Roger Moore became well-known in the 1950s, appearing in such movies as *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (Elizabeth Taylor), *Diane* (Lana Turner), *Interrupted Melody* (Eleanor Parker), *The Miracle and Gold Of The Seven Saints*.

When the big studios ended their contract lists, Moore moved smoothly into television, appearing in series from *The Alaskans* and *Ivanhoe* to *The Saint* and *The Persuaders*. He even filled in as the

English cousin in *Maverick* after James Garner broke his contract.

Then, in 1973, he took over from Sean Connery as 007 in *Live And Let Die*. He made six more of the Bond action flicks until checking out with *A View To A Kill* in 1985.

Moore, a vigorous 68, lives in Monaco and Switzerland and spends much of the year travelling throughout the world as special representative for UNICEF, the United Nations' Children's Fund. When people ask if that is a new role for him, he replies, "No, a 'role' implies that you are playing something. This is real life." He credits Audrey Hepburn with enlisting him.

The man who combated Smersh and other demons now campaigns against iodine deficiency in the world.

"What is iodine deficiency?" Moore asked rhetorically. "It's the cause of, most physically, goiters — also other problems such as stillbirths and miscarriages. Almost one-third of the world's population suffers from it. It's quite simple to rectify, but it costs money."

"America and Switzerland were the first countries to recognise it. Napoleon, trying to recruit an army in Switzerland, found the men couldn't jump up and down and clap hands at the same time because

of the lack of iodine in their bodies.

"America started the iodination of salt, followed by Switzerland and some of the rest of the world. But it's a problem to get countries that don't have the resources to iodise their salt and introduce it to animal feed as well."

"It's not a subject that grabs people very much, but I have to talk about it as one of my duties."

Moore has made only three movies since removing Bond's fancy duds: *Bed And Breakfast*, about a castaway who charms a houseful of Maine women; *Bullseye*, a lookalike comedy with Michael Caine that went directly to video and *Fire, Ice And Dynamite*, a German-made sci-fi film that had limited distribution. He also starred in a two-hour TV movie, *The Man Who Wouldn't Die*.

More films in the future? He replied: "Maybe some misguided producer will see *The Quest* and say, 'oh, he's still alive. We must use him.'"

"I have a couple of projects that are simmering. One is a remake of a French film which is almost ready. All we need is to find a leading lady old enough to look as if she would be interested in being kissed by me."



Actor Roger Moore is shown in a scene from his new film *The Quest* as he portrays Lord Edgar Dobbs, a pirate who rescues the star of the film Jean-Claude Van Damme. (Reuter photo)

Street theatre jazzes up Indian election

By Lisa Vaughan
Reuters

NEW DELHI — While India's usual election-time carnival atmosphere has been stifled this year by strict polling regulations, one avenue of political expression has been irrepressible — street theatre.

Groups such as Delhi's left-wing Jana Natya Manch (JNM), which means dance theatre, have been operating at their peak ahead of general elections being held over six staggered voting days from April 27 to May 30.

JNM has been packing in three and four political plays a day in and around Delhi's dusty streets for the past month to campaign for the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M), says Moloyashree Hashmi, who leads the amateur actors' group.

"At election time, we usually have a play," Hashmi said. "We feel we can affect a lot of people this way."

In this country of 920 million people where only a small percentage can afford a ticket for a stage play, street theatre has grown in popularity in the past few decades.

At least 200 groups exist but only a handful perform year-round, Hashmi said.

Founded in 1973 by left-wing theatre amateurs, JNM started on the stage but from 1978 concentrated solely on street theatre and has earned a national reputation as a pioneer in the field.

"We thought if we couldn't take people to the big theatre, we would take small theatre to the people," Hashmi said.

JNM's plays deal with social issues or events such as busfare hikes, strikes, unemployment, problems of women, food price rises or literacy, Hashmi said.

Its current play, a campaign skit for the CPI-M called *"Lal Lal Leharana Re"* (Wave The Red Flag), is a spoof on the \$18 million corruption scandal that led to the resignation of seven government ministers earlier this year.

Told with gags, clever choreography and original songs, the story satirises India's top politicians vying brazenly for the biggest bribes in game-show fashion.

Full-lipped Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao of the Congress Party is lampooned as a baby with a dummy and a bib, while his rivals in the main opposition BJP, Atal Vajpayee and L.K. Advani, are portrayed as a bumbling duo.

In the end, their greed foils them and the Communist Party triumphs, with actors waving large red flags bearing the party's hammer and sickle symbol.

Hashmi's commitment to street theatre is deeply personal as well as political.

In January 1989, well-loved playwright and cultural activist Safdar Hashmi, Hashmi's husband and one of JNM's founders, was murdered by armed hoodlums during a performance in Sahibabad township 13 kilometres from Delhi.

The tragedy propelled JNM to nationwide prominence. Newspaper reports estimated 10,000 mourners, including many artists and intellectuals, attended his funeral. Peaceful demonstrations were held around the country to protest his death.

The group and his widow performed the same play, about an industrial strike which had just ended, on the same spot three days after his death, and have been performing ever since.

The actors normally arrive unannounced on the scene. Within 20 minutes the cavorting, costumed thespians will have attracted a crowd of 200 to 300 curious onlookers of all ages who disperse the instant a hat is passed for donations.

The company performs near factory gates, in working class slums, schools and colleges, office complexes, institutions, residential areas and villages.

In Delhi, around 20 street theatre groups coexist, Hashmi said. But the scene is also thriving in other major cities such as Calcutta, where some 30 companies have formed specifically to help leftist election campaigns.

Ram Gopal Bajaj, director of the National School of Drama, said: "Street Theatre has taken a social subject of immediate import to Indians who don't have the means to see a performance in a theatre and raised their sociopolitical awareness."

But whether it gets people out to vote is hard to gauge.

Most opinion polls are predicting a hung parliament in the current polls, with the most popular forecast for a coalition government with the ruling Congress and the leftist National Front-Left Front.

Deepak Roychowdhury, a magician in Calcutta, is campaigning for the Left Front coalition, of which the CPI-M is a partner.

"I am showing through magic how election promises vanish after the Congress (Party) has come to power at the centre," he said.

Disney dilemma — studio name often as much of a curse as a blessing

By John Horn
The Associated Press

BURBANK, California — The Disney name, long a magnet for families, is now drawing an unexpectedly loyal following from yet another throng: Detractors.

Organisations from both the political left and the right are attacking Disney with new fervour, and Hollywood's biggest brand name has become in some ways as much a liability as an asset.

In the last few weeks, Disney has been censured for employing a racist talk radio host, for granting benefits to the partners of its gay and lesbian workers and for selling children's Pocahontas clothing allegedly manufactured in sweatshop conditions. These recent complaints follow a wave of objections linked to three controversial 1995 movies — *Kids*, *Priest* and *Powder* — from Disney and its Miramax subsidiary.

Some people within Disney say the entertainment giant is unfairly singled out for business and artistic practices common to Hollywood. The conglomerate's critics rebut that defence, saying a company that has made billions selling benevolence through feel-good animated musicals and sanitised theme parks must consequently meet higher corporate standards.

The faultfinders also are discovering that Disney — unlike several other show business companies — can react to complaints swiftly and conscientiously.

"We knew that Disney has an allergy to controversy," says Jeff Cohen, whose liberal media watchdog group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting pushed for Disney to muzzle (or at least balance) the fanatic New York radio host Bob Grant. In the New York Times, Mr. Cohen's fair anti-Grant advertisement headlined, "Is bigotry a Disney family value?"

FAIR complained about Grant's bigoted WABC Radio diatribes (in which, among other things, he called blacks "savages") for two years with no success. Weeks after Disney

completed its purchase of WABC owner Cap Cities/ABC, the pressure increased: The Rev. Jesse Jackson and NAACP President Kweisi Mfume called on Disney to fire Grant.

Within days, Grant was shown the door.

While Disney maintains it played no role in the April personnel decision and that it was ABC's radio division to decide, the timing looks strange. (Grant was immediately signed up by rival New York radio station WOR.)

Last week, a small human rights organisation said clothing made by Disney and talk-show host Kathie Lee Gifford licensees was produced by labourers toiling in oppressive, poverty-wage (28 cents an hour) conditions. The National Labour Committee said it did not specifically target Disney; a tour of a Haitian plant simply turned up Disney garments.

"Quite honestly, I was surprised," says Charles Kernaghan, the executive director of the nonprofit National Labour Committee. "It's just hard to imagine — but this is not recent. Disney has had a 20-year history with this company." Kernaghan estimated Haitian workers were earning 7 cents on every Disney clothing article selling for \$11.

Disney disputed the allegations, albeit less emotionally than Ms. Gifford's trembling television response. The studio said it could find no evidence of minimum wage violations. Mr. Kernaghan says under current exchange rates, Disney's response was accurate — the Haitian minimum wage is 28 cents.

The larger issue, Mr. Kernaghan says, is whether Disney will make the moral decision to correct the horrific manufacturing conditions.

"I hope and believe (the allegations) are going to have a positive impact," Mr. Kernaghan says. "I have heard that (Disney Chairman) Michael Eisner is now aware of the issue, and I think he's a decent person and will do the right thing."

A Disney spokesman did not return a telephone call. The Christian right American Family Association targeted Disney when the studio last year added benefits for the live-in companions of gay and lesbian employees. Disney is one

of the final Hollywood studios to add such insurance coverage, and the AFA has not boycotted Time Warner or other entertainment companies with similar coverage.

"I think it was the straw that broke the camel's back," says Alan Wildmon, the AFA's public relations director, in explaining why AFA has not hounded other studios as feverishly. "You can't boycott everybody and be successful."

Mississippi's AFA, like some other conservative Christian organisations, earlier had complained about the Disney and Miramax films *Priest*, about a tormented gay cleric; *Kids*, a frank look at pubescent sex and *Powder*, a movie about a troubled teen directed by a convicted child molester. *Kids*, given the adults-only NC-17 rating, eventually was distributed by a stand-alone company set up by Miramax's chairman.

"Disney wants it both ways, and you can't have it both ways," Mr. Wildmon says. "They hold themselves out to be a family business, and then they depict priests as drunks and then they hire child molesters right out of prison."

Nancy Kurland, an assistant professor of management and organisation at the University of Southern California, says Disney has "very clean reputation" that can attract scrutiny.

"The Walt Disney Co. should be held to a high standard," Prof. Kurland says. "But all companies should be held to a high standard."

Not too long ago Disney was criticised for its distinct lack of contemporary values. In 1980, Disneyland ejected two gay men from its Tomorrowland terrace for dancing together, which a jury later ruled was discriminatory. These days, the very modern trends of raucous talk radio and racy movies have Disney on the defensive.

"It's almost a weird reversal," says Andrew Exler, one of the two gay men kicked off the Disneyland dance floor. "They have to change with the times, but they were one of the last ones to do it."

Ines de la Fressange — a top-level fashion designer

The French fashion-designer Inès de la Fressange this year celebrates the fourth anniversary of her fashion house and, at the same time, her 11th collection. As fame suits her perfectly, this gifted woman confirms her exceptional talent with her unique style, just like her, full of gaiety and simplicity. Inès de la Fressange, whose headquarters are in Avenue Montaigne in the heart of Paris, has quickly made a place for herself in the world of fashion, elegantly silencing the rare few who saw her simply as the muse of the Chanel house.

By Catherine Baudet

PÂRIS — Inès Marie Laetitia Isabelle de Seignard de la Fressange, who was born in Saint-Tropez, in the south of France, in 1957, of an Argentinian mother and a French father, decided to become a fashion model at the age of 19. Hardly had she made her debut when her innate class and her slender physique made her the greatest model of the 80s. She modelled for the most famous fashion houses such as Hermès, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Yves Saint-Laurent, Kenzo and Christian Dior. For nearly ten years, she was the exclusive muse of the Chanel house which invested fully in her exceptional face and personality. It must be said that Inès is really astonishing. Not only is her beauty obvious, but her kindness and talent too. With her eyes sparkling with intelligence, her husky voice and her easy smile, she is a sensation. She, better than anyone else, knows how to bring clothes alive.

But, in 1989, Inès gave up Chanel and the catwalks. She decided to set up her own fashion house. For two years, she beavered away to finally bring out her own label in 1991. From the outset, she made a big impact. She opened a 400-square-metre store, decorated by Alexis de la Falaise, on the very chic Avenue Montaigne, where many top fashion houses are located. She designs all her models, chooses the fabrics, decides on the presentation, recruits her staff and supervises the management. She was thought to be frivolous and turns out to be a workaholic. As a result, her first collection was a tremendous success and already asserted itself as a new trend. This is quite normal. Madame de la Fressange does things in a natural, but certainly not in a

haphazard way.

Inès has principles

The great Inès is neither a rebel nor an agitator. She leaves that up to others. Her purpose has never been to impose her influence in the world of fashion nor to rival with fashion designers whom, moreover, she admires. She simply gives a new approach to models which have always existed, ones that women like, such as tweed jackets, fitted blazers with trimming, pure virgin wool gabardines and velvet jeans, flat shoes like men's shoes but much finer in a host of colours, and gloves and scarves, printed with oak leaves — Inès's lucky emblem. "Perfectly simple things to go with what one already has. I used to have wardrobes bursting with clothes, but now I prefer to have few things but good ones."

Has Inès reached the age of reason? No, simply the age of principles. Inès has made it a veritable philosophy that an item of clothing should be timeless, of impeccable quality and, above all, suit all women whether they are tall, plump or petite, simply because her only intention is to consider nobody as beneath her.

Inès's spirit is also found in her shops, in Paris, Lyons and Marseilles, but also in New York and in Beverly Hills.

"I wanted places where no trivia and no certificate of authenticity was sold, nor false residences or simply fashion boutiques. My shops are authentic cosy, concrete and living places, decorated to my taste. My friends will end up meeting there to find all those familiar things that, some day or other, I would have ended up buying for myself, or for them... Above all, there are no aggressive sales girls like those who jump on you as soon as you arrive. I want people to be able to browse in my shops without having to buy anything." There are big sofas for the men to wait on, telephones in the changing-rooms so that customers can consult



Inès de la Fressange celebrates fourth anniversary of her fashion house

their friends there and then and enough space to be able to move in intimacy without having to show oneself to the whole store in one's underwear or trying on a new outfit.

As Inès does everything that she enjoys, one finds the things that she likes, all together, sheets, napkins, jewellery, accessories, lingerie, ties and pullovers for men and even dog-leads!

After only four years of existence, the Inès de la Fressange brand has become firmly established, which is a terrific achievement in the world of fashion. In 1993, the Americans acclaimed her as a real triumph. Today, it is the Japanese as she is opening five shops there, in Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo. But Inès is not neglecting her compatriots. Soon they will be able to discover La Maison d'Inès where they will find furniture and useful and decorative objects which are simple and functional just like her fashions. One may well wonder how she also has time to paint watercolours, go horse-riding and, above all, to look after her two-year-old daughter Nine, who is her greatest joy. One thing is certain, the 90s really are "Inès years" — L'Actualité En France.

Mobilisation rather than magic in the war against malaria

ADDIS ABABA — A consistent and organised approach to tackling tropical diseases such as malaria can be as critical to their control as are the optimistically named "magic bullets" in the form of drugs.

Three decades of malaria control effort in Ethiopia, says malaria specialist Oli Dzirata, have produced "devastating waves" of policy — and now decentralisation is producing another upheaval.

So although the government's new health policy places "control of communicable diseases and epidemics" at the top of its priority list, malaria control remains little more than a distant goal.

"Malaria Control Programme experts agree that in the long battle between mosquito and man, the mosquito has once again proved more consistent and less self-destructive," says Dr. Dzirata, a parasitologist who has worked on malaria in Ethiopia for 25 years.

Control is possible: The World Health Organisation (WHO) says that malaria has been kept at bay in areas of the world inhabited by 1.6 billion people. But there are more than 300-500 million clinical cases a year, at least 90 per cent of them in Africa, where malaria kills between one million and two million children under five annually.

In Ethiopia alone, more than 35 million people in three-quarters of the country are at risk and until recently fear of the disease

prevented the settlement of extensive areas of fertile land. Only population pressure and the introduction of spraying finally encouraged large numbers of people to move south.

Forced resettlement programmes that moved people from highland to lowland areas, coupled with displacement through war and famine, exposed millions more to risk of the disease.

Traditionally, malaria was treated by self-medication with herbs and drinks. Apart from some pockets of the country controlled by the Italians, anti-malaria programmes only began with the start of the public health movement in the 1950s.

After pilot projects had shown the feasibility of eradication, a full-scale attempt to wipe out malaria was launched in 1966.

Dr. Dzirata, who is a member of the Ethiopian Public Health Association's Expert Committee on Malaria, says that the Malaria Eradication Services was an independent organisation with thousands of personnel, a budget that almost matched that of the Ministry of Health, and a military-style chain of command and operation.

It was one of the most efficiently organised and managed institutions in the country, with relatively well-trained and experienced malaria workers. Local training was provided by a National Malaria Eradication Centre at Nazareth, about 100 kilometres east of the capital.

But within four years, in line with WHO thinking, the eradication approach was dropped and the objective became malaria control.

As part of the policy shift, the anti-malaria drive was to be integrated into the general health service, says Dr. Dzirata, but delays, a lack of guidelines and strategy hampered that effort. Staff were not given a clear idea of what they were supposed to be doing or how they should do it.

The seriousness of the situation was dramatically illustrated by the failure to produce an epidemic in 1981.

The uncertainty was compounded, recalls Dr. Dzirata, when the malaria programme was given the job of handling other vector-borne diseases. Even today its role has never been properly clarified, nor has its status and relationship with local and regional organisations been defined.

In the reorganisation, the Vector-Borne Diseases Programme lost 25 per cent of its staff, including many experienced workers. Information processing has been disrupted by the upheavals: Often the programme does not even get reports on epidemics. The malaria training centres have stopped functioning.

Workshops and seminars have attempted to iron out some of the issues and make the programme more coherent, Dr. Dzirata notes, but problems remain.

A new organisational structure has been submitted to the government, but has not yet been approved.

Sorting out the Vector-Borne Disease Programme is not the only task. Dr. Dzirata emphasises that to get to grips with malaria, a range of technical resources will have to be mobilised to monitor developments in vector and parasite biology and disease management technology, and to adapt them to local conditions.

He also calls for a huge public education programme on disease prevention. Fortunately, Ethiopia has community structures, such as the Kebele (urban dwellers' associations), which make this possible and which he suggests might provide useful examples for other African countries.

The most important steps are the development of community-based approaches — like that adopted in Tigray in 1992 — and promotion of primary health care.

By building on the grassroots participation and community health care developed during the civil war, he says, the Tigray programme has already cut the number of malaria cases. It uses community health workers to provide preventive drugs to pregnant women, a key target of the campaign, and mobilises people in the fight against mosquitoes by encouraging them to clean up their environment.

"The newly-created regional administrative councils," he points out, "could also help by enacting laws on the cleanliness of households and by giving powers to district inspectors to guarantee enforcement." — Panos Feature.

Genetic link between cancer and overgrown children picked

WELLINGTON (AFP) — New Zealand scientists said they have discovered a genetic link between cancer and some overgrown children.

Four biochemists from the University of Otago in Dunedin said in a statement they found the link between overgrowing and cancerous kidney tumours after three years of study.

The scientists said a growth gene disorder, called IGF2, caused some children to grow at unusually large rates. These children were large at birth and remained very large throughout childhood.

Otago health research training fellow Ian Morison said it had long been recognised that many children who developed cancer had high birth weights.

"Now we know it is possibly linked with this growth disruption. The overall rate of cell growth is increased such that there is a predisposition towards developing some kind of cancer," he said.

Tony Reeve, a research fellow involved in the discovery, said the genetic malfunction was only one of the causes of overgrowth in children.

He said he wanted to allay the fears of parents with large children because the genetic malfunction appeared to be extremely rare.

Both parents had the gene, but in most cases the female gene was silenced during formation of the egg.

However, in cases involving the malfunction, the gene was activated, causing the foetus to receive a double dose by mistake, Mr. Reeve said.

Mr. Reeve said the likelihood of overgrown children getting cancerous kidney tumours could be equated to that of a person who drove a car consistently at high speeds having an accident: "they may not, but the chances are increased that they will."

Their work has been published in the international scientific journal *Nature Medicine*.

Overweight Chinese warned off slimming pills

BEIJING (AFP) — A Chinese newspaper has warned the country's increasingly overweight urban population to refrain from turning to miracle slimming products to try to shed their extra pounds overnight.

The *China Daily* said 70 million Chinese citizens were obese and the number of sufferers was growing at a rate far faster than that in developed countries.

Most obese people are among some 300 million people who live in Chinese cities, where rising living standards over the past 16 years have led to increasingly sedentary lifestyles and fatty diets, including Western fast food.

In Beijing, some 33 per cent of the population is overweight, the report said.

As the developed-world problem of obesity has taken hold in China so too has the obsession to lose extra pounds, the report indicated, warning people against miracle weight-loss products.

"Rome was not built in a day. Nor did that spare tyre around your waist accumulate overnight. Want to trim it within days? Unfortunately, that's impossible," the medical page article said.

More than 200 types of medicated slimming products are sold in China, it said, but quoted experts as saying that most had little effect while others "foster diarrhoea, hunger or poor appetite, which might cause metabolic disorders and eventually harm one's health."

A number of people have suffered from dizziness, fatigue and, in some cases, anorexia after taking such pills, it said. Rapid weight reduction could cause people eventually to become even fatter and to be more susceptible to heart attacks, it warned.

It urged Chinese citizens, instead of resorting to pills, to develop a balanced diet and to take regular exercise.

A particularly popular brand of diet pills is "Guo's Totally Nutritious

Slimming Extract," which promises to knock off half a kilo a day.

"Once reaching the standard weight, the slimming process will automatically come to an end," the packaging claims, adding that slimmers will be left feeling "light, comfortable and full of vitality."

The newspaper highlighted the problem of growing numbers of fat children in China, blaming this both on pregnant mothers overeating and parents — only permitted to have one child under strict family planning rules — spoiling their single offspring.

The number of overweight children is growing at a rate of eight per cent a year, it said.

Beijing Obesity Research Treatment Centre Director Jia Baopeng warned that, because obesity in children caused the number of fat cells in the body to increase, the problem was much more difficult to cure than among adults.

Researchers optimistic about pill to ease impotence

ORLANDO, Fla. (R) — Men who now turn to needles, vacuum devices and surgical implants to get and keep an erection may one day be able to take a simple pill to ease their impotence, researchers say.

A series of studies to be released Monday at the American Urological Association's 91st annual meeting here suggest a drug known generically as Sildenafil, taken an hour before sexual activity, can help impotent men get an erection.

"We are cautiously optimistic that it will be a treatment for what is a common and distressing ailment affecting millions of men," said Dr. Ian Osterloh of Pfizer Central Research, a unit of Pfizer Inc. that is developing the drug. "This treatment has helped men get and maintain an erection."

Researchers cautioned that the drug needs further testing and is probably several years away from market.

The potential market for an impotence pill is huge, researchers say. An

estimated 35 million men suffer from some erectile dysfunction in the United States alone and by some accounts, one in 10 men has the problem.

Dr. Osterloh said the drug enhances erections by increasing levels of a chemical, cyclic GMP, produced in the penis during sexual stimulation and causes blood flow to increase.

In three separate studies of men with erectile dysfunction, Pfizer researchers in Sandwich, England found the drug enhanced erections, Dr. Osterloh said. The subjects included men up to 70 years old who had suffered from impotence from three months to 40 years, with an average of three years.

In the largest study, of 351 men who suffered impotence with no apparent organic, or physical, cause, 88 per cent answered positively to the question "did the treatment improve your erection?" Dr. Osterloh said. The positive response was 92 per cent in the second trial and 83 per cent in the third.

The most common side effect was a headache, and in some patients, facial flushing, he said.

"It would probably have to be called a breakthrough," said Dr. Perry Nadig, professor of genitourinary surgery at the University of Texas Health Science Centre in San Antonio.

Currently there are three popular treatments for impotence. Men can inject into their penis a drug that dilates arteries, relaxes muscles and lets the organ fill with blood.

Or they can use a vacuum device that draws blood into the penis, where it is trapped with an elastic band or disk that allows the man to maintain an erection for about 30 minutes.

The third treatment is a penile implant involving the surgical insertion of a rigid rod or an inflating device that pumps fluid into cylinders in the penis.

Dr. Nadig noted that all of the other methods involve some preparation that many couples find awkward.

Dermatologists warn Americans on skin cancer

By Grant McCool
Reuter

NEW YORK — One in five Americans is at risk of getting skin cancer but most are not even aware of the dangers of exposure to the sun, dermatologists said.

A seminar on "families frying together — sunbathing habits of parents and children" heard that a new survey of adults by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found 50 per cent of men and 35 per cent of women did not recognise the term melanoma.

"It is increasing more rapidly than any other cancer in the United States and melanoma is now the fifth most common cancer that we see," New York dermatologist Darrel Rigel told a news conference held by the American Academy of Dermatology.

Rigel said research at the New York University School of Medicine found that one in five Americans was at risk of having skin cancer. The research showed that it is the most frequent cancer in women ages 25 to 29 and the second most frequent in 30 to 34-year-old women, after breast cancer.

The CDC survey released last week to mark Melanoma Skin Cancer Detection And Prevention Month found only 26 per cent of respondents correctly iden-

tified early signs of skin cancer. Only 58 per cent knew that a severe childhood sunburn was a risk in developing the cancer later on in life.

The CDC said the low awareness was "especially troubling" because another recent CDC report said there was a 34 per cent increase in deaths from skin cancer between 1973 and 1992, including a 48 per cent increase in deaths among men.

The American Academy of Dermatology said it expected about 7,300 people to die from malignant melanoma in 1996.

Dermatologists recommend that parents protect children by keeping them out of the sun when possible and applying sunscreens beginning at six months old. Other preventive steps include staying out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Using sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 and reapplying it every two hours wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants, hats and sunglasses, remaining in the shade, and avoiding surfaces that reflect the sun's damaging rays.

The increase in the disease was not confined to the United States. Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy and Scotland were other countries where malignant melanoma had increased in recent decades.

ANSWERS PUZZLES

(A) am, in, at, me, it, ma, pa, to, ant, aim, ate, pot, top, pat, nap, net, ten, tip, man, men, map, pen, pin, mop, tap, tin, pie, oat, pant, mime, atom, mint, mine, pine, mate, time, pane, main, tame, emit, moan, tape, memo, team, mean, pain, poem, poet, tone, note, meat, meant, ommit, moment.

(B) Mrs. Dunne

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

(1) Some of Paul's epistles (e.g., that to Philemon and the second to Timothy); Marco Polo's account of his travels to the Far East; Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World; Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; Oscar Wilde's De Profundis; the first stories of O. Henry; Hitler's Mein Kampf.

(2) Baby about 71 lbs.; pig 180-240 lbs.; Steer 113/4 cwt.; crocodile 2 tonnes; football 14 oz.

(3) Pitcher — baseball
third man — cricket
elder hand — piquet
skip — bowls
cox — rowing
left inner — hockey
fly-half — rugby
welter-weight — boxing
spot — billiards
end — American football.

(4) Wien — Vienna
Munchen — Munich
Anvers — Antwerp
Venezia — Venice
Firenze — Florence
Vavsovie — Warsaw
Livorno — Leghorn
Genova — Genoa
Daugavpils — Dvinsk
Wilno — Vilna.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

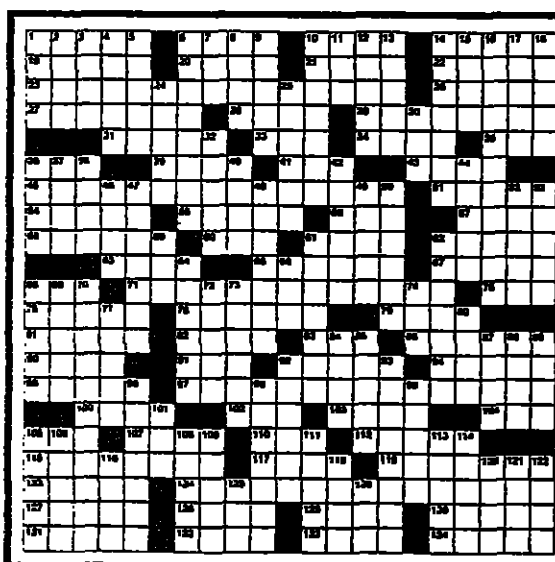
HOCUS-POCUS
By Chuck Deodone

ACROSS

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DOWN

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100. Deuce



CRYPTOGRAMS

1. DOCKS TWON FEUDLE IK CHWLDON
TECHNOLLO ANWY OXONS WHO DO KILZ
WIL. CANCEW WA OGR FIVM EA DO
GNOCHZ LDO YDCRUH — By R.C. Doyle

2. BAD BOIL HF FURRY CUPSAURKY FOIL
ILBNK OK ACHOSI HE EPT END BOIL. — By Ed Rothman

3. NZ INRAGE, GNRAT NE FLY BLOFT DOPT
SVC NDIV V UNRPPA FNDOI ZNA JOGRVY
VDJ JOGINRAGY. — By Thomas H. McGuffey

4. ERLCONLITE: DRA ENDCSRENTL GROWING
LAGS HI THERWI TWINTY MY
MYBIOONKYEI. — By Frank H. Stein

Diagramless 19x19
By Harold B. Connors

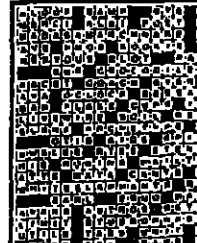
ACROSS

1. Conductor
4. Kind of bird
11. Way to spread the word
12. Whiffles
13. Consonant
14. Phone reader
15. Shaded head
16. Circle segment
17. Fives
18. Lateral
19. Secondary to
20. Surfer
21. Office services
22. House addition
23. Out gaskets
24. Males
25. Bats or Rango
26. Wine
27. Medial plant
28. Chompers
29. Teacher's group
30. Lateral

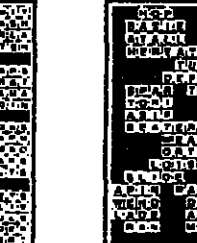
DOWN

1. Conductor
4. Kind of bird
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12. Whiffles
13. Consonant
14. Phone reader
15. Shaded head
16. Circle segment
17. Fives
18. Lateral
19. Secondary to
20. Surfer
21. Office services
22. House addition
23. Out gaskets
24. Males
25. Bats or Rango
26. Wine
27. Medial plant
28. Chompers
29. Teacher's group
30. Lateral

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

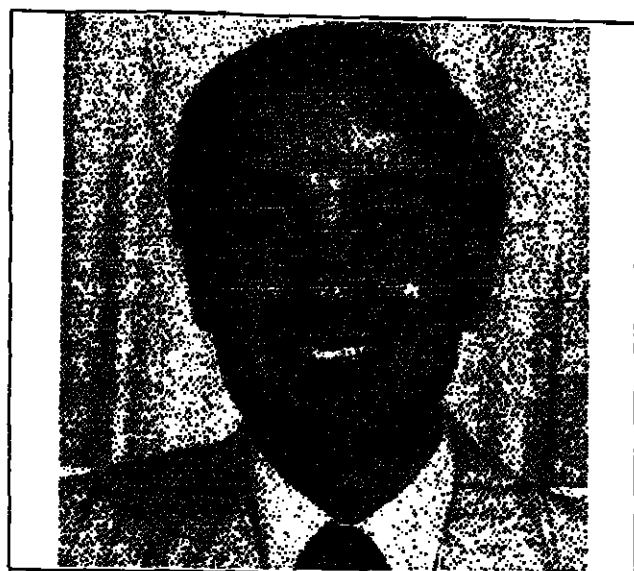


SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



'Conditions of peace accompanied by use of economic and safe air ways will promote international travel to the region by leaps and bounds'

FOLLOWING IS the text of the speech delivered by Ali Ghandour, His Majesty King Hussein's advisor on civil aviation and tourism, on "An overview of air transport in the Middle East" at the Airports Middle East 96 Conference organised by Arabian Exhibition Management WLL, in association with Airports International Magazine at Bahrain International Exhibition Centre on May 14, 1996:



Ali Ghandour

Civil air transport in the Middle East, at present and in the foreseeable future, cannot be considered in a vacuum but must be viewed in a global context. Hence, it becomes necessary and useful to recapitulate developments that took place in the international arena. This is important because an understanding of the past has a perceptible bearing on future direction.

The winds of change which have swept the airline industry in recent years are indeed gusty. Change was neither gradual nor incremental, but was forced on the world community by deregulatory action in the U.S., which was in a hurry and could not wait, deeply embedded to principles of laissez-faire. The U.S. felt cocksure of itself because of a built-in self-adjusting mechanism in its economy that allowed — and promoted — free entry and free exit and, therefore, the well-being, and for that matter, the fate of any one particular airline was not of any primary concern. Western Europe took time to absorb the shock and reluctantly responded, and adapted, to change. In retrospect, the European Union's resistance to change was misguided, bearing in mind the fact that the Treaty of Rome all along provided for increased competitiveness in the realm of civil aviation, that was belatedly exercised.

Today, the EU, on the one hand and the U.S., on the other, are two giants sharing a common denominator and subscribing to principles of free enterprise. They have set the pace, yet there are more chapters to unfold. The contagion is spreading. Asian and Latin American nations have already formed their own groups and are reacting positively. The swing and orientation towards free market forces are gaining the upper hand since trade and investment are increasingly being seen as the twin engines of development and growth.

In the Third World, except for the newly industrialised countries, the situation looks somewhat different and perhaps less reassuring. For ideological reasons, they were inclined towards command economies or quasi-planned regimes. This, of course, invoked elements of protection. The national carrier, the symbol of statehood and nationalism, was singled out for preferential treatment. With the wisdom of hindsight, these actions could now be viewed as having retarded rather than accelerated economic growth of which tourism has been, and still is, a significant arm. However, it is only fair to postulate that context is vital in judging history.

In Third World countries, the airline today is not any more the sacrosanct institution it once was, to be maintained at all costs. Nowadays, there are more overpowering considerations and imperatives to reckon with. Unemployment, poverty and disease, let alone interminable fighting amongst many nations, combine together to debilitate the national economy.

As a corollary, and helped by the demise of communism politically, socially and economically, Third World countries open up to the Western world and look forward to the

promises of free enterprise. In the realm of civil air transport, they do so with some reservations and a feeling of trepidation. They fear becoming exposed to the ravages of the forces of the marketplace without being able to influence the course of events.

The international scene has also changed. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, we have, except for the U.S., which alone remains a world political and economic power, superpowers of a different kind emerge that provide thrust in a geo-economic sense.

The world today is already divided amongst several regional groupings: ASEAN, which links Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, has a combined population of more than 335 million and a combined gross national product (GNP) of \$310 billion in 1991.

By contrast, the single EU market has more than 350 million consumers with a combined GNP of more than \$4.37 trillion. The market base has broadened significantly as a result of the recent agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, thus forming a grouping of 19 countries. The base will become larger as more Eastern European countries are admitted into the common market.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), between the United States, Canada and Mexico, has a consumer base of 360 million and has a combined GNP of about \$6 trillion.

North Africa, Africa and the Arab Middle East look comatose: the lack of harmony amongst them has militated against serious and major moves towards rationalisation, let alone consolidation.

In Latin America, the Andean Pact region is making progress in the realm of international civil air transport, unencumbered by the lack of political and economic cohesiveness that plagues Africa and the Middle East.

As is usually the case, the U.S. provided in the 1990s, as it did in the 1940s, the forward thrust towards the creation of a new world order, in the field of international civil air transportation.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his message to the opening plenary session of the Chicago Conference in 1944 stated: "As we begin to write a new chapter in the fundamental law of the air, let us all remember that we are engaged in a great attempt to build enduring institutions of peace. These peace settlements cannot be endangered by petty considerations or weakened by groundless fears. Rather,

with full recognition of the sovereignty and judicial equality of all nations, let us work together so that the air may be used by humanity, to serve humanity."

As a corollary, the International Civil Air Transport Organisation (ICAO) came into being.

Bilateral aviation agreements served the world community well over a period of many years. But there was need to have a fresh look at the future of economic regulation, prompted particularly by the ramifications of the U.S. Deregulation Act of 1978 and subsequently the emergence of the European single market. It is to be remembered that much of the impetus came from the U.S. Frustrated by lack of progress towards bilateral open skies regimes, U.S. interests became determined to achieve their goal of liberalised markets through multilateral agreements.

ICAO caught wind of the need to consider change and convened for the purpose an international colloquium in Montreal during April 1992, which I was privileged to address. The success of the colloquium prompted ICAO to establish a study Group of Experts on Future Regulatory Arrangements for International Air Transport (GEFRA).

Again, I was privileged to have been appointed to the panel which, together with the ICAO Secretariat, prepared for the historic Worldwide Air Transport Conference which took place in Montreal during December 1994. We worked closely together over a period of almost 18 months. We had hopes and we had vision too. But our input, recommendations and deliberations had yet to be tested — and contested — at the worldwide two-week conference. The conference was to explore every aspect of air transport regulation, including market access; ownership and control; safeguards and dispute resolution; structural impediments such as state aids and slot allocation; relationship with wider regulations like competition law; and doing business issues such as ground handling. ICAO wanted to develop a new regulatory framework which could accommodate a move to multilateralism whilst still working effectively on a bilateral basis.

As it turned out, ICAO's Worldwide Air Transport Conference fell short of the aspirations that had been voiced in anticipation. Developing countries were not happy with the impetus towards liberalisation, and notwithstanding the safeguards and the safety nets that had been proposed, aired their concerns. They believed that security lay in maintaining for the time

being a protectionist stance. That the conference was powerless in this respect was understandable. In the first place, unlike the conference at Chicago, 51 years earlier, which produced the Convention on International Civil Aviation, an air transport conference was not designed, intended or empowered to negotiate or to draft any international treaty or agreement. Neither could it produce resolutions, binding or otherwise.

At this juncture, I wish to recall that when I was at the helm of Royal Jordanian, we called for a three-day conference in 1983 in Amman entitled "Regionalism in international air transportation: cooperation and competition," organised by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) under the auspices of Alia, as the national carrier was then known. The issues that are being discussed now internationally are the same we raised 13 years ago. During our discussions, we dared raise the prospects of a Chicago II. In retrospect, it seems the time was not ripe then, has not matured today, but has yet to come in its own good time.

Indeed, events create their own momentum: the 15 European Union nations agreed on March 11 this year to seek a single EU-wide accord with the U.S. to give EU and U.S. airlines greater access to each others' airports and more leeway to coordinate fares and schedules.

The proposal for an accord is in response to concerns that several EU nations have undercut European cooperation by negotiating separate, bilateral deals.

Germany angered many of its EU partners by allowing an alliance between its national carrier, Lufthansa, and United Airlines, the second-largest U.S. carrier.

Since in the realm of international civil air transport there is always fear of the strong overpowering the weak, comfort can be taken in trade agreements that had already been reached. Under the aegis of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), now known as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Uruguay Round of Trade negotiations aimed at the progressive liberalisation of world trade in goods and services concluded on Dec. 15, 1993, with a package of agreements on Trade in Services (GATS). The Annex on Air Transport General Services to this agreement excludes traffic rights and services directly related to their exercise, but with three exceptions: the repair and maintenance of aircraft; the sale and marketing of air transportation, and computer reservation systems. In addition, the annex provides that any specific commitment or obligation assumed under the GATS shall not reduce or affect a party's obligation under bilateral or multilateral agreements, that are in effect at the entry into force of the agreement establishing the World Trade Organisation, and also provides that the GATS dispute mechanism is to be invoked only after dispute settlement procedures in bilateral and other

multilateral arrangements have been exhausted. States which are parties to the GATS will apply a different regulatory regime for the three air transport services included in the annex.

For the Arab World, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Gulf, there are comparisons to be drawn and lessons to be learnt from our international experience. We marvel at the EU of 15 diverse states, brought together by unity of purpose and shared ideals and goals. We look in bewilderment at the European single market and ask ourselves why we lag so much behind. It is perhaps all too easily forgotten that the Arab League came into being in 1945 to provide a framework for unity and cooperation. But as was the case then, and as it is today, we were long on rhetoric but short on delivery. In no time, Palestine became the burning issue, and the liberation of Palestine had become an obsession. It was strategically a divisive issue that brought in its wake tragedy and disaster. Now the scene is set for a new era — the promise of peace and prosperity. Let us hope so.

It is tempting to view Arab aviation as one whole, but it will be misleading to do so. Instead, a more pragmatic approach would be to sectionise the Arab World — the Middle East and North Africa — into meaningful and coherent sub-regions, without defeating the overall objective. For example, (a) the Levant — Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Palestine, (b) the Arabian Peninsula, including the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, (c) the Maghreb — and (d) The Nile Valley comprising Egypt and the Sudan. This segmentation is useful in evolving an aviation strategy that can promote aggressively travel and trade.

At this point, suffice it to say that the Arab carriers, by and large, answer to the following characteristics:

1. The great majority of Arab carriers are small in relation to the international carriers. (Even a giant, such as Saudia, which ranks 25th worldwide derives 70 per cent of its traffic and 30 per cent of its revenue from its extensive domestic network).

2. Arab carriers are state-owned. Privatisation, in most cases, is being talked about in order to alleviate the public burden.

3. Arab carriers are undercapitalised. Tactical rather than strategic marketing policies are employed to meet current obligations in order to assure continuity of operation.

4. The concept of the flag carrier imposes bureaucratic practices, notwithstanding the recent trend towards adoption of commercially operational policies.

Consequently, and having regard to the political dichotomy that prevails in the Arab World, Arab aviation, in general, has not made the progress it should have over the past years and has not lived up to its true potential. Institutional factors, structural impediments if you will, that were politically motivated militated against free intra-Arab travel. Few forms of collabora-

tion amongst Arab states, bilaterally, did not survive for very long because from the start they lacked the ingredients necessary for institution building. In the Arab World, unlike Europe, institution building was top-down rather than bottom-up and hence was not assured of success. But, as I shall presently explain, recent geopolitical factors that have taken place provide for a turning-point hitherto unknown and provide a glimmer of hope.

In retrospect, it is evident that Arab aviation per force proceeded along familiar lines. The network has been subject to rationalisation, which led individual Arab carriers to retract from positions that they have hastily undertaken. Seat factor for the Arab carriers combined was below IATA's international scale. Similarly, the load factor underperformed. Hence, it becomes imperative that imaginative and aggressive sales techniques are employed. In Europe, the total cost concept was deployed a long time ago to promote cargo sales whereby air cargo shipments command a comparative advantage over other modes.

Labour productivity is an important element of cost to reckon with. Whereas most international air carriers resorted to downsizing, the Arab air carriers, according to AACO, caused an increase in the labour force to the tune of 10 per cent annually for the period 91-93. It is argued that the lower levels of pay in the Arab World compensate for an inflated labour force. Again, this is a dangerous line of thinking to follow, and it should therefore be remembered that keeping cost to a minimum, commensurate with safe and reliable operation, is an adjunct to promoting, and increasing, competitiveness.

Since demand is fairly inelastic to price for travel in the Arab World primarily because of the nature of travel, the Arab consumer succumbed to a situation that he could hardly influence. Consumerism in the Arab World is not yet a force to be reckoned with.

The Levant countries — Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine have been subject to vicissitudes over the years — more downs than ups — with negative developments in one country affecting adversely period of 15 years, the economy of Lebanon was in shambles and civil aviation suffered accordingly. The spirit of the nation survived the trauma and Lebanon is now well on the road to recovery. Iraq is a sad story to tell. The country's involvement in Kuwait, tragic beyond description, is still being felt. The country is subject to U.N. sanctions and civil air transport has come to a halt. Syria, on the other hand, plods along all too familiar lines and continues to cater to traditional traffic. Modernisation of the fleet is much talked about, but has yet to happen. Royal Jordanian reels under the burden of undercapitalisation that caused a heavy debt which continues to accumulate with no end in sight. Privatisation of the airline is deemed as the necessary panacea but has

yet to be undertaken. The successful experience of Philippine Airlines seems to be lost on candidates for privatisation because of the lack of will to tackle a national carrier's debt.

In other words, the situation looks pretty gloomy at present. What then of the future? I believe the prospects are good, if we move in the right direction.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is almost behind us. The normalisation of relations, hitherto undreamt of, has created a new environment which seems to be beneficial to air transport. When an accord is reached between Israel and Syria, which seems possible during the course of the next 18 months, and coupled with Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights and South Lebanon, the picture becomes complete.

The Levant countries, because of geographic proximity, historic world-renowned touristic sites, let alone religious sites so central to the monotheistic religions, commend themselves to be sold as one package. Needless to say, conditions of peace accompanied by use of economic and safe air ways that are opening up now will promote international travel to the region by leaps and bounds. I can foresee a substantial increase in mass and high-yield travel which unfortunately could have ecological consequences. In other words, a burst in air travel will create bottlenecks at the touristic sites. Such an avalanche needs to be tamed through concerted inter-governmental actions to prevent an unsavoury situation.

In the past few years the Arabian Peninsula suffered great financial constraints which continue to resonate. While Kuwait carried the brunt — and ravages — of the Iraqi occupation, not only has the liquidity of oil-rich Arab nations been siphoned off, their international indebtedness has expanded and increased. Moreover, the level of oil prices has not been helpful. Ten years ago oil analysts anticipated a rise in oil prices in 1995 which had not materialised. Prices hover over a range of \$15 to \$19 per barrel today and will persist in the foreseeable future. Adjusted for inflation, it is probable that the purchasing power of today's prices is just about the same as that prevailing prior to the October war of 1973 which fuelled the ensuing oil boom.

In this climate the economics of operation of the state-owned airline does not escape government scrutiny. And, of course, there is a limit to what the national economy can bear or sustain. Hence, a change of heart and mind has now overcome bureaucratic thinking and the prospect of privatisation of the national carrier, whether partial or total, is no longer considered taboo.

Gulf Air is a classic example of the multinational carrier, along with SAS. Both have outlived other formations such as Singapore-Malaysia and East African Airlines. However, does the recent creation of new carriers by member states of the GCC, such as Oman and Qatar, and before that Emirates

pose a problem? At a glance it may appear somewhat of a paradox as the creation of new airlines is seemingly a contra-indication to the global trend towards mergers and alliances. I do not believe so. I believe such a development sets the trend and pace, and encourages the urge to privatise with the ultimate aim of efficiency, and profitability, in mind. It is well to remember that the purpose of privatisation is the creation of wealth, irrespective of which of the public sector is targeted.

Arab oil-producing countries are not at all oblivious to the direction of oil prices in the near-term, and therefore incline to promote other sectors such as services, trade and tourism to shore up their economies and hopefully insulate themselves against economic decline.

In terms of traffic growth for the Arabian Peninsula as a whole it is conceivable that a high annual rate of 10 per cent can be maintained, notwithstanding the trend of turning over jobs held by expatriates to nationals.

In the North Africa and Africa theatres, civil air transport continues to develop along familiar but unexciting patterns. Libya is subject to U.N. sanction, and air transport has come to a complete standstill. Algeria is in turmoil. The prospects for a multilateral approach are remote under present circumstances. Stability is a prerequisite for concerted action and progress.

On a final note, I wish to remind you that it was about time for the Arabs to return to basics. Pragmatism rather than rhetoric should be the guiding factor. Hence, sub-regional development, within the Arab region makes sense and will eventually contribute to the overall strength of one whole. Privatisation of Arab air carriers is the catalyst that we have been looking for. It makes cooperation possible where it had not been forthcoming before. Collaboration, cross-border alliances and mergers, which are the present wave in the United States, Europe and the Pacific Rim, become within reach in the Arab World. There are good grounds for optimism.

According to futurist John Naisbitt, three industries will drive the global economy of the 21st century: telecommunications, information technology, and travel and tourism.

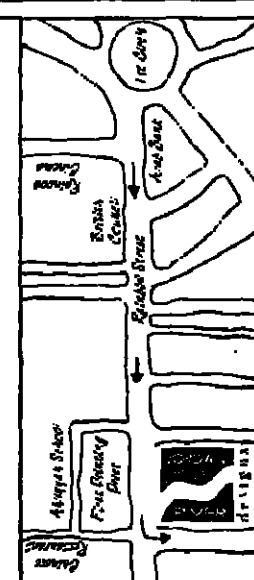
Travel and tourism, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council, form the world's largest industry and most potent creator of employment. Together they generate more than \$3 trillion of output per year, and by 2006 that total will have more than doubled to \$7 trillion. To elaborate, the tourism industry alone which accounts for about 6 per cent of the world economy, tripled in size between 1970 and 1990, and promises to grow by 50 per cent more by the year 2000.

In our part of the world, if we seek unity of purpose, take due cognisance of community of interests and rise to the challenge, we shall have a good chance to capitalise on the opportunities being presented.



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Embassy in Amman, for his new post as
Director General Del Gabinete Del Ministro De Interior
wishing His Excellency all the best

Arab Gulf states fear oil price slide after Iraqi return

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states have earned more than \$2 billion in extra oil revenue this year but they are worried such gains could be offset by a price slide after Iraq's return to the market, oil executives in the region have said.

Oil prices hit a five-year high of nearly \$25 last month of a prolonged winter in the northern hemisphere and inconclusive negotiations between Iraq and the United Nations on an oil-for-food deal.

But they started to climb down over the past two weeks to below \$20 as global demand began to slacken in the second quarter.

With OPEC largely exceeding its nominal output ceiling, a resumption of Iraqi crude exports could add pressure on prices in the third quarter.

"Gulf states fear that prices could sharply decline in the third quarter if Iraq is allowed to resume oil supplies and some OPEC members continue to produce above their quotas," said an oil executive close to Gulf governments.

"Such a decline could widen the deficit in their budgets and slow down their economies despite the price rise in the first quarter."

The price of OPEC's basket of seven crudes averaged \$18.9 in the first four

months of 1996 compared with \$17.3 in the same period of 1995.

This means the income of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states increased by around \$2.3 billion, based on a price rise of \$1.6 a barrel and their crude exports of nearly 12 million barrels per day (bpd).

Earnings could be assumed much higher compared with the \$14-\$16 price projected by the six members in their annual budgets.

According to official and independent estimates, the 12-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) pumped 26.14 million bpd in April, nearly 1.6 million bpd above its official ceiling of 24.52 million bpd.

Total world crude supplies hit a record 72 million bpd in April and was forecast by the International Energy Agency to rise in the following two months. In contrast, it expected demand to dip to 69.9 million bpd.

The excess supplies will further swell if Iraq and the United Nations finalise a deal and OPEC's quota violations persist, oil sources said.

"Earlier expectations forecast oil prices would average \$15.5 in 1996, much lower than in 1995. I believe they could fall below that level in the third quarter if OPEC does not cut extra

production," one source said.

Iraq and the United Nations last week resumed talks on the oil-for-food deal, under which Baghdad could release 700,000 bpd on the market.

OPEC, persistently hit by quota busting, has not made clear whether all its members agreed to hold an emergency meeting for Iraq's return.

But many of its oil ministers have called for slashing overproduction to absorb Iraq, the second biggest oil power in the world after Saudi Arabia.

OPEC's President Ammar Makhluhi of Algeria and the group's Secretary General Rikwan Lukman have visited Iraq and other Gulf states to discuss Baghdad's return and seek discipline within the group ahead of its June meeting in Vienna.

They also travelled to Venezuela, which has been named as the main culprit in OPEC's quota violations.

GCC states, which include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with non-OPEC Bahrain and Oman, have maintained unusual discipline in oil production because of fears that prices could collapse.

The six states produce nearly one-fifth of the global crude output and oil provides more than 80 per cent of their total income.

Arab fund builds emergency cash reserve

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) said Tuesday it was building an emergency reserve to face a possible shortage in funds caused by loss in overseas investment or defaults by indebted members.

The Abu Dhabi-based fund, a regional IMF-style institution, said the reserves were being financed through 10 per cent of the annual income or 5,000 Arab Accounting Dinars (AAD) or \$22,500 from the general provisions.

It said the Arab finance ministers, who make up the AMF's governing board, decided to build up the emergency reserve in 1989 and they set aside 25,000 AAD

(\$112,500) from the provisions as a base.

"The AMF is building an emergency reserve to face any unexpected losses in the future," the fund said in a report on its financial operations to mark 20 years of its creation by the 22-member Arab League.

By the end of 1995, the emergency reserve grew to 60,000 AAD (\$270,000) and more funds are to be transferred until it reaches 25 per cent of the fund's paid up capital of around \$1.43 billion the report said.

The AMF is already hit by arrears from Iraq, Sudan and Somalia due to accumulating debt over the

past 10 years. The arrears, including the principal debt and interest, totalled nearly \$769.5 million at the end of 1995.

The fund said Monday it was negotiating with the three countries to tackle the problem. But AMF sources ruled out an imminent solution because of U.N. sanctions against Iraq and financial woes in the other two defaulters.

It suffered from another problem 10 years ago, when former AMF chairman Jawad Hashem, an Iraqi former planning minister, was convicted by an Abu Dhabi court of embezzling nearly \$80 million from the fund.

Omani five-year plan to lure \$18.4 billion

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Oman expects its new five-year development plan to attract 7.086 billion riyals (\$18.4 billion) in investment in oil, gas and other sectors, an Omani official has said.

"According to projections for the 1996-2000 development plan, the total public and private investment will reach 7.086 billion Omani riyals," said Mohammad Al Khusaibi, secretary general of the national economy ministry.

He said national investments were forecast at around 4.79 billion riyals (\$12.45 billion) and foreign capital, covering both direct and indirect investment, at 1.4 billion riyals (\$3.64 billion).

The rest will be provided through foreign loans, which are expected to reach a total of 1.28 billion riyals (\$3.3 billion), he added.

Mr. Khusaibi said the investment would cover a \$7 billion gas liquefaction project, development of the oil sector and other fields.

Oman, a non-OPEC oil producer with an output of around 850,000 barrels per

day, approved its fifth development plan in January. Officials said the plan would give priority to reforms and development of the non-oil sector.

Spending through the plan was projected at 10.09 billion riyals (\$26.23 billion) compared with 10.8 billion riyals (\$28 billion) in the previous plan. The cut in expenditure slashed the budget deficit to \$1.39 billion from \$5.82 billion.

Like other Arab Gulf oil producers, Oman has been involved in reforms, including privatisation, to cushion the impact of weak crude prices and tackle deficits in its budget and balances of payments. It has also been forced to borrow from the local and foreign markets to finance reforms.

Mr. Khusaibi put Oman's external debt at around 1.45 billion riyals (\$3.77 billion). But he said the government was committed to its policy not to exceed a loan ceiling of 1.5 billion riyals (\$3.9 billion).

"Such a loan ceiling for the fifth development plan

will not be exceeded ... for example, the loans expected to be received this year according to the plan will be around 277 million riyals (\$720.2 million). But those expected to be paid are also 277 million riyals," he said.

Oman expects 29 billion dollars in LNG income

Oman expects to earn nearly \$29 billion from sales of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from its first LNG project, an Omani official has said.

Around \$12.4 billion will come from the upstream part of the project, involving production and supply of gas to the plant in the port of Sur, said Salim Ibn Shaaban, oil ministry under secretary.

The rest will be generated from the export of six million tonnes of LNG annually during the project's 20-year period, he told local newspa-

pers. Mr. Shaaban said the upstream project was fully owned by the government while the second part was a joint venture with foreign partners.

The project, Oman's first LNG industry, will cost around \$7 billion and is expected to be commissioned in 2000.

"The engineering contract, including the supply of equipment, will be awarded in September," Mr. Shaaban said.

Oman has signed a long-term contract with South Korea to supply it with four million tonnes of LNG per year. It is also negotiating similar deals with Japan, Taiwan and other countries.

The LNG project was planned three years ago to tap the country's reserves of natural gas, estimated at 750 billion cubic metres (25 trillion cubic feet).

Egyptian gas output rose to 13.8 billion cubic metres in 1995

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's natural gas output rose to 13.8 billion cubic metres (483 billion cubic feet) in 1995 from 12.5 billion cubic metres (437 billion cubic feet) the previous year, Petroleum Minister Hamdi Al Banbi announced Tuesday.

"Starting from the second half of the 1970s, there has been a continuous increase in commercialised production from approximately a quarter of a billion cubic metres (8.5 billion cubic feet) per year in 1976," he said.

"During the past two years, Egypt's gas reserves were doubled to reach 22.3 trillion cubic feet (650 billion cubic metres) by the addition of new discoveries, mainly in the North Delta area and the Western Desert," said Mr. Banbi.

He told the French businessmen's association here that Egypt had since 1973 implemented 216 production sharing agreements with 48 partners.

"A total of \$20.3 billion were spent up to the end of 1995 on long-term investment on different activities."

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MAY 16, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Study into new interests and investments today which appeal to you, however, you do not have sufficient funds for such as yet. Later tonight it is a good time for you to spend as much time with loved ones.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can have more harmony and happiness at home today if you do not permit a fellow associate to interfere in your life. Later this evening you can meet with close friends and have some fun out on the town with them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A problematical affair at your career activities has to be solved early today, however, later tonight you can accomplish a great deal. This evening is a good time for seeking the assistance of one in authority.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Plan to save more money today and avoid heavy expenditures for pleasure, and be wise about it. Later this evening is a good time for spending some quality time with your loved ones in some joint pleasures.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Don't let a home situation today keep you from accomplishing a good deal in the outside business world. Tonight can be a time for you to proceed with a new project and show some bigwig of your abilities.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't waste time today with some unimportant person in your life and plan how to become more successful by making the right contacts. Later tonight will be good for you make the best of any business opportunity.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Avoid that financial difficulty today and be more concerned with the personal side of life. Be more generous tonight with showing affection towards your loved one and he or she will return your attention you show.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Listen to one today who has been very successful and put away any prejudice you may have, which could deter your progress on any assigned activities. Later tonight will be the time for you complete any new projects.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Do not permit some secret concern at this time to delay your advancement in the outside world. Make new contacts tonight with those individuals who have the clout to make your efforts bear fruit in a short time.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Avoid a demanding person today, however, be sure to listen to the advice of one in business who is interested in your welfare. Later tonight will be the best time for you to conclude any business activities with much success.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Avoid that bigwig today who is full of anger, or you could be the brunt of it. Be with fellow associates later tonight whom you can trust and will provide you with the proper advice for you to be successful in the days ahead.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Study your environment today and see how best to improve it instead of going off on some tangent. Later tonight will be a good time for you to spend some quality time with close friends and loved ones in some special tasks.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Kick that stumbling block away today which is in the path of your progress towards gaining a cherished goal. Later this evening will be good if you desire to spend some good time with some special friends.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Some situation may be upsetting in the morning today. Don't forget to handle important credit and civic matters which must be completed this evening for the next day will be critical for your success.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A new plan may seem farfetched today, but you have only to go after it early and it can be put in motion. Later this evening you can have some special times with your loved ones if you do not allow any difficulties to occur.

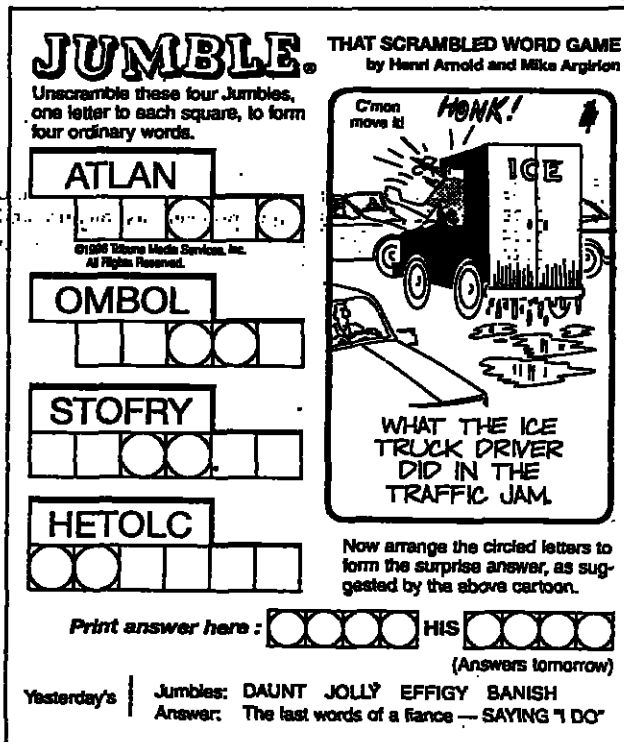
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You and your mate have differing points of view today on some plan you have concocted. Do something social with close friends and you can have some good times together on some special activities.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A mundane affair could get you quite enraged in the morning today, but by further study, you find it has its beneficial side also. Later tonight could be quite beneficial to you if you take the advice of a bigwig.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your career activities may seem tiring in the morning today, owing to atmospheric conditions, but soon you get more enthused than ever about it. This evening will be special for your loved ones if you do something together.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You may have to wait until later in the day today to have that pleasure you've been anticipated. Do something constructive towards your success and you will feel quite pleased with yourself.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Bernice Gordon

ACROSS

- 1 Proficient
- 5 Venomous snake
- 10 Ski lift item
- 14 Diving bird
- 15 "— and a peculiar grace" (Somerville)
- 16 Part of T.A.E.
- 17 Duke Ellington song
- 19 Fat
- 20 Nodded approval
- 21 Wave amplifiers
- 23 Desert garments
- 24 Biblical spy
- 25 French painter
- 28 Lists
- 31 Took a chance
- 32 Smart fellow
- 33 Fiber
- 34 Told a tall one
- 35 Silken
- 36 Karenina
- 37 Holiday time
- 38 "I — return" (MacArthur)
- 39 Link
- 40 Mental infirmity
- 42 Sp.
- 43 Shivering
- 44 Utters
- 45 Straighten out
- 47 Patronage to relatives
- 51 Arm of the Amazon
- 52 Song of the '30s
- 54 Kind of house
- 55 Journalist Pyle
- 56 Egyptian goddess
- 57 Space acronym
- 58 Awe
- 59 Pea holders

DOWN

- 1 Gluck, of opera
- 2 Disapproving cries
- 3 Author Anita
- 4 Made beloved
- 5 Rays
- 6 S.A. mountain range
- 7 Domestic
- 8 Large
- 9 Fragrant
- 10 Hanging ornament
- 11 Woolen cap worn in the Highlands
- 12 State strongly
- 13 Deserters
- 18 Between the sheets
- 22 Author Milne
- 24 Quibble
- 25 Takes it easy
- 26 Unsophisticated
- 27 Old TV series
- 28 Singer Simon
- 29 Supernatural creature
- 30 Bridges
- 32 Full of substance
- 35 Protected
- 36 Part of O'Hare
- 38 Malign
- 39 "Happy birthday"
- 41 Lizard
- 42 Outdid
- 44 Cuttlefish product
- 45 Atop
- 46 CA wine valley
- 47 Hawaiian goose
- 48 — facto
- 49 Skidded
- 50 Unity state
- 53 Gool



German tennis player Steffi Graf shows the trophy she received as the world's best tennis player in 1995 after her first match at the German Open in Berlin on May 14 (Reuters)

Graf receives Sportswoman of the Year award

BERLIN (AP) — Steffi Graf, still stunned by her play in Rome, was back in her usual dominance Tuesday at the German Open.

Graf overpowered Tami Whitlinger-Jones with her serve and big forehand at the \$250,000 tournament, beating the American 6-1, 6-2 in a second-round match.

After her match, Graf was given the 1995 worldwide Sportswoman-of-the-Year award for her performance last year by the international sports journalist organization.

The World No. 1 said she had been shocked by her play at last week's Rome Open, where she struggled in earlier rounds before falling to Swiss teenager Martina Hingis in the quarterfinals.

"For four days there, I didn't know how I was going to keep the ball in play — you think this can't be normal," Graf said. "The fear is still

there, but now I think I'm on the right way."

Graf, seeking her ninth German Open title, was joined in the third round by Hingis and third-seeded Iva Majoli of Croatia.

The 15-year-old Hingis, seeded ninth, recovered from some erratic early play and having her serve broken to rout Jolene Watanabe of the United States, 6-3, 6-0.

Majoli, the World No. 4, needed one hour and 43 minutes to win a 1-6, 7-5, 6-2 struggle against Sweden's Asa Carlsson, who is ranked 35 places lower.

No. 10 seed Nathalie Tauziat of France also advanced with a 7-5, 7-5 win over Russia's Elena Makarova and her compatriot, 16th-seeded Sandrine Testud, beat South Africa's Joanne Kruger, 6-1, 6-4.

Lindsay Lee was the only American to win Tuesday,

beating Latvia's Larisa Neiland, 6-2, 6-2. Jana Kandarr, a 19-year-old German, upset another American, Ann Grossmann, 5-7, 7-6 (7-3), 6-4.

Whitlinger-Jones, 27, was never able to challenge Graf's serve and lost in 49 minutes. The top-seeded German displayed her usual power game, but also had patches of erratic play.

In the fourth game of the second set, she netted two straight easy backhands. "Certain things were not too solid, but it was okay. My serve was better," Graf said. "After Rome, I just want to find my game and be optimally prepared for the upcoming French Open."

Germany's Sabine Hack also ousted compatriot Andrea Glass, 6-2, 6-4, while Romania's Ruxandra Dragomir beat Hungary's Andrea Temesvari, 4-6, 6-2, 6-3.

7th Arab Cup Winners' Cup Wihdat lose second match to Saudi Al Riyad

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The hosts of the 7th Arab Cup Winners' Cup competition, the Kingdom's soccer league champions Al Wihdat, Wednesday lost 1-0 to Saudi Arabia's Al Riyad in Group 1 matches on the third day of the week-long event.

The defeat was Al Wihdat's second, and practically ruled out their chances of qualifying to the second round.

In an earlier match, Algeria's Olympic Al Mdyah maintained their winning streak when they overcame Al Muharraq of Bahrain 3-2. Striker Kamal Jamhoun led the Algerian team, giving his team the lead whenever Al Mdyah equalised from powerful shots. Jamhoun also gave his team the win over hosts Al Wihdat in the opening match.

Al Riyad and Al Mdyah are now tied with six points in Group 1 standings.

Group 2 teams had the day off Wednesday. Morocco's Khreibek lead the standings and will next face Al Itihad of Qatar Thursday. Al Faisali of Jordan meet Sudan's Al Mawdeh in the second match.

Participating teams have never before won the title or even runner up position. Past champions, notably teams from Egypt and Tunisia, are missing the championship especially the championship record holders, Olympic Baidawi of Morocco, who won the title a record three consecutive times.

The top two teams in each group will play the semifinal round starting May 20. The final match will be held May 22.

While Al Wihdat are playing the event for the first time, Al Faisali's participation set a championship record with their fourth appearance in the event. (Al Ramtha were the first to represent Jordan in 1993).

Jordanian results in the past four Cup Winners' Cup participations included two draws and 11 defeats in total.

ASF announces special prizes and awards

The Arab Soccer Federation (ASF) announced a list of prizes allocated for players and teams. These include:

- Best goalkeeper
- Best player
- Top scorer
- Team sportsmanship award
- Best team fans

Meanwhile, the closing ceremony of the referees seminar was held under the patronage of Mr. Othman Sa'ad, secretary-general of the ASF. The seminar, held on the sidelines of the competition currently underway, was held May 10-15 with 32 referees taking part. A coaches seminar was concluded Tuesday.

STANDINGS

| Group 1 | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|----|----|-----|
| | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
| Riyad | 2 | — | — | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| Mdyah | 2 | — | — | 3 | — | 6 |
| Wihdat | — | — | 2 | 1 | 3 | — |
| Muharraq | — | — | 2 | 2 | 5 | — |

| Group 2 | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|----|----|-----|
| | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
| Khreibek | 1 | — | — | 2 | — | 3 |
| Faisali | — | 1 | — | — | 1 | — |
| Itihad | — | 1 | — | — | 1 | — |
| Mawdeh | — | — | 1 | — | 2 | — |

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New York Knicks' Derek Harper (left) and Patrick Ewing (right) celebrate a victory against the Chicago Bulls in the Eastern Conference semifinals May 14 in Chicago. The Bulls defeated the Knicks 94-81 to win the best-of-seven series in five games (Reuters photo)

Bulls finish off Knicks, Spurs avoid elimination

CHICAGO (R) — Michael Jordan scored 35 points to lead Chicago to a 94-81 victory on Tuesday as the Bulls finished off the New York Knicks four games to one to continue their march toward the National Basketball Association championship.

The Bulls advance to the Eastern Conference finals, where they will likely face Orlando. The Magic lead the Atlanta Hawks three games to one with game five on Wednesday.

Chicago, which won an NBA record 72 games in the regular season, faced a tougher than expected challenge from the Knicks but improved to 7-1 in the post-season.

In the Western Conference semifinals, the San Antonio Spurs staged off elimination with a 98-87 victory over the Utah Jazz.

The Jazz lead the series three games to two with game six in Utah on Thursday. The Seattle SuperSonics, who swept the two-time champion Houston Rockets in four games, await the winner of the Utah-San Antonio series.

While an energized Jordan led the way for Chicago, Scottie Pippen had 15 points and 11 rebounds and Ron Harper chipped in 12 points for the Bulls, who played without injured sixth man Toni Kukoc for the third straight game.

Patrick Ewing led New York with 22 points,

Anthony Mason added 16 points and Charles Oakley had 14 points and 13 rebounds for the Knicks, who scored only 36 in the first half and were not in contention in the final five minutes for the first time in the series.

"They were short on offense," Jordan said. "They only had a couple guys who could put the ball in the hoop. That's why they needed to play a perfect game defensively every time."

"They gave us a good series, even though it only went five games. They played us as hard as anybody in the league."

rebounding the Knicks, 43-36 — 13-6 on the offensive glass. New York also committed 20 turnovers, leading to 17 Bulls points.

"We just couldn't get over the hump in the four close games," said Knicks coach Jeff Van Gundy. "They found a way and we didn't."

Added Ewing: "We gave them a battle and could have won any or all of the first four games."

"I'm disappointed, very disappointed."

In San Antonio, David Robinson stepped up and scored 24 points — two better than his two-game output at

NBA PLAYOFFS

Said Chicago Coach Phil Jackson: "We knew it would be a slugfest. I respect the Knicks. They played very hard and never quit at any time."

Ewing pulled New York within 76-68 with 5:42 to play on the first of two free throws before the Bulls went on a 7-2 run to make it 83-70 with 4:14 left.

The Bulls had built a 42-36 halftime lead and New York came no closer than five points in the second half, pulling within 44-39 just 71 seconds into the third quarter.

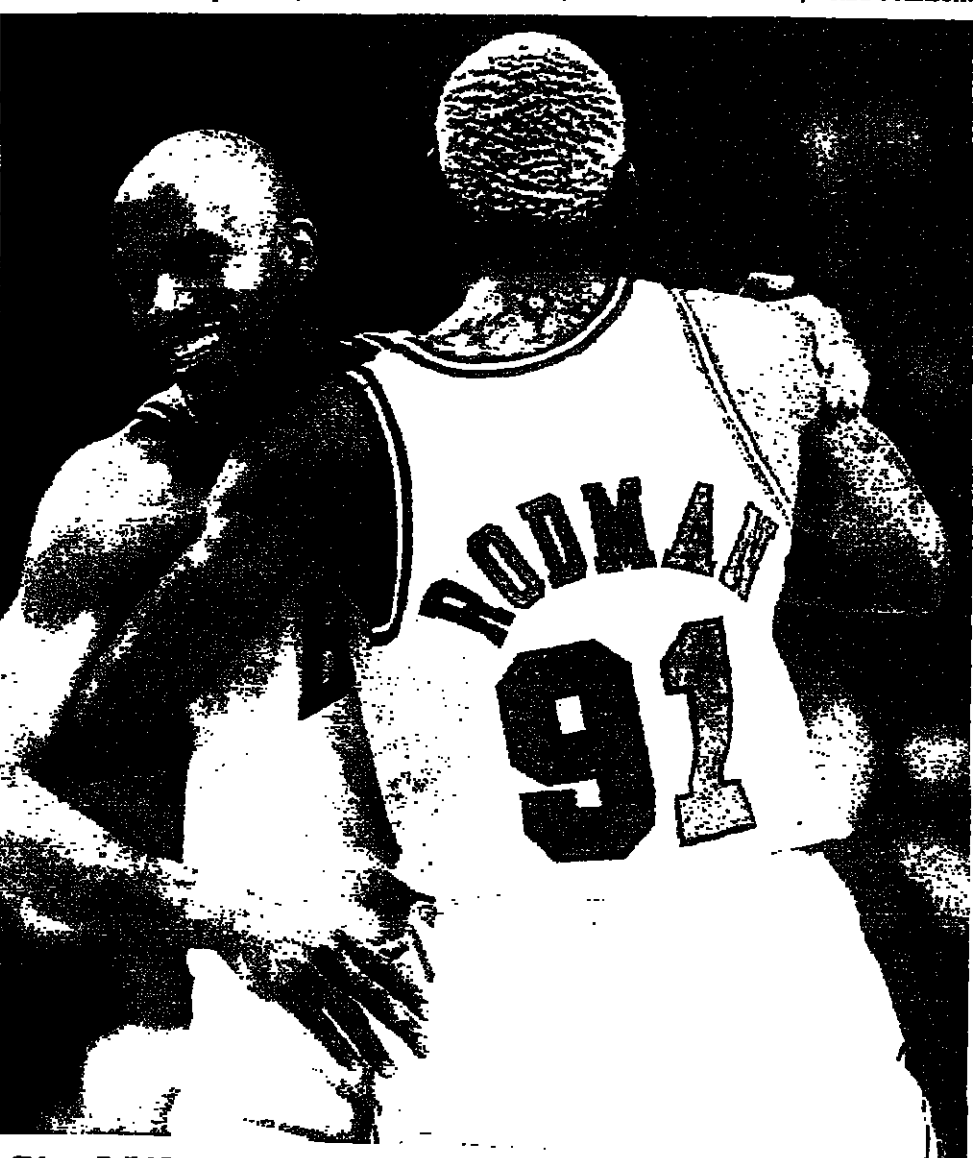
Once again, Chicago controlled the boards, out-

Utah — to keep the Spurs' season alive.

Robinson, who scored 11 points apiece in losses in games three and four at Utah, capped a decisive 14-0 third-quarter run with a basket that gave the Spurs a 61-45 lead. The Jazz never came within double digits in the final quarter.

Robinson also pulled down 15 rebounds for San Antonio, which committed only 10 turnovers. And Avery Johnson and Vinny Del Negro scored 21 points apiece on 16-of-28 shooting.

"We just hadn't been playing Spurs basketball the whole series," said Johnson.



Chicago Bulls' Ron Harper (left) and Dennis Rodman celebrate a victory against the New York Knicks in the Eastern Conference semifinals May 14 in Chicago (Reuters photo)

Amman Academy - Khaldia Funfair

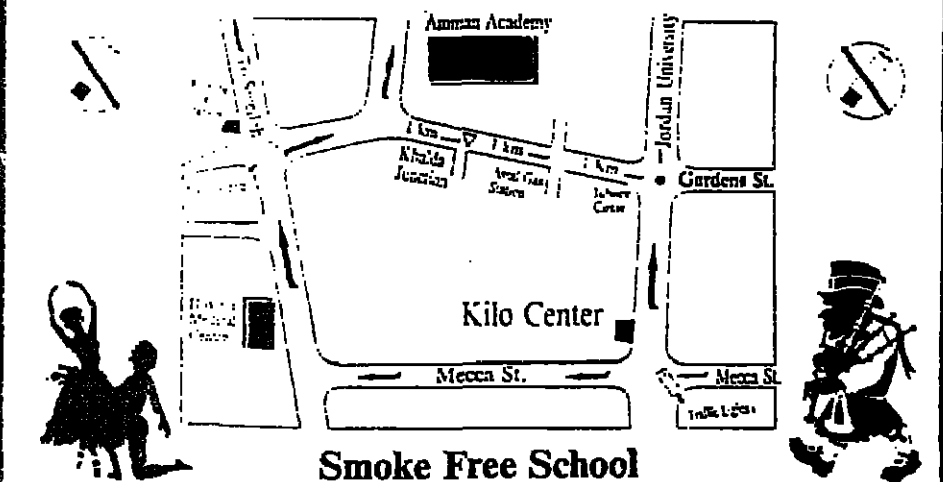
Tomorrow is the time for young and old to have fun and enjoy many games, shopping arcade, Music Box, coffee shop, art exhibition, pony rides, cart rides, games, school activities, 2 fashion shows, telematch, army band, entrance raffle draw.

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|-----------------|--|---|---|---|---|

14th Jordan Rally starts today

HRH Prince Abdullah joins Bakhshab, Bin Sulayyem in two-day event

By Aileen Bannayan

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Thirty-two participants are expected to start the 14th Jordan Rally, which sets out from King Abdullah Gardens Thursday afternoon for a gruelling 860 kilometre drive in the two-day event that forms the second round of the Middle East Rally Championship.

The desert rally, organised by the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ), includes 325 kilometres of 14 special stages that will take competitors from Amman heading southwards and reaching the rose-red city of Petra on the second day.

Participants from 12 countries are taking part. Jordanian entries are headed by His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein who is returning to the rally scene after an eight-year absence.

Prince Abdullah who has a third place overall finish in his credit in the 1986 and 1988 Jordan rallies, will be driving a Ford Escort RS Cosworth with co-driver Philip Mills.

Fifteen other Jordanian drivers will be contesting the event including 1995 Jordan Drivers Open champion Ahmad Al Daoud in a Ford Escort Cosworth RS.

Two other top Jordanian competitors are Ma'rouf Abu Samra who finished third overall in last year's Jordan Rally and Bashir Bustami who came in fourth.

Abu Samra will be partnered by Amjad Shamayleh in a Ford Sierra Cosworth while Bustami will be driving a similar Ford with co-driver Malek Hariri.

Serious contention for the rally title is expected to be limited to the well-equipped and experienced former Middle East champions Abdullah Bakhshab of Saudi Arabia, and Mohammad Bin Sulayyem of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Bakhshab, the defending champion, will be driving a Toyota Celica GT 4 with co-driver Bobby Willis. Last year, he clinched his first Jordan Rally title and set a record by winning every single stage of the event.

Bin Sulayyem with co-driver Ronan Morgan in a Ford Escort Cosworth RS will be looking for his sixth Jordan Rally title.

The original entry list included 37 participants. Five pulled out prior to Wednesday's scrutineering. They are Sheikh Abdullah Al Qasbi, Khalifa Al Muhairi and Sadeq Fadel of the UAE, and Jordanians Amjad Farrah and George Shamoun.

Other competitors include Cypriots Andreas Tsouloftas and Minelios Melissas, Bahrain's Jassem Al Fardan, France's Remi Samuel, Great Britain's Stephen Hancke, Kuwait's Sabah Al Anzi, Australia's Ron Cremen, Qatar's Naser Khalifa Al Attiyeh and the UAE's Salem Bin Shiban.

Jordanian competitors include Faris Bustami, Mohammad Al Daoud, Hassan Abu Samra, Zeid Asfour, Bishara Qu'zoor, Bashar Yasin, Asem Aref, Fayek Sayegh, Tony Khulasi, Ibrahim Ata Ali and Tamer Tabi.

The Forte Grand remains the rally headquarters for the third consecutive year despite RACJ lacking a main sponsor for the event for the third time in its 14-year history.

Despite the fact that many competitors look forward for the Jordan Rally for its unique asphalt stages through scenic village roads on the first day, participants will be missing that aspect for the second year running after RACJ officials cancelled the asphalt stages following considerable problems in '94 and '93 rallies when fans disrupted some stages by throwing rocks at marshals and cars.

Last year, 15 out of 26 starters finished the rally including six of the 14 participating Jordanians. Like last year, the route will cover all desert tracks. The rally sets out at noon Thursday as competitors will drive four special stages and a total of 241 kilometres on the first day.

Action starts at 7 a.m. on Friday as the route will cover 617 kilometres and will include 10 stages.

The four special stages on the first day include:

*Tunaib A 17.37 kilometres

*Salayta 31.95 km

*Mudeisiesat 15.96 km

*Tunaib B 17.35 km

The first is due back at



1995 Jordan Driver Open champion Ahmad Al Daoud at Wednesday's scrutineering (Photo by Issa Abu Othman)

include Cypriots Andreas Tsouloftas and Minelios Melissas, Bahrain's Jassem Al Fardan, France's Remi Samuel, Great Britain's Stephen Hancke, Kuwait's Sabah Al Anzi, Australia's Ron Cremen, Qatar's Naser Khalifa Al Attiyeh and the UAE's Salem Bin Shiban.

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The four special stages on the first day include:

*Tunaib A 17.37 kilometres

*Salayta 31.95 km

*Mudeisiesat 15.96 km

*Tunaib B 17.35 km

The first is due back at

the Forte Grand by 6 p.m.

Action starts at 7 a.m. on Friday. The route will cover 617 kilometres and will include 10 stages.

*Tunaib A 17.37 kilometres

*Swaqqa A 34.43 km

*Hafira A 38.22 km

*Hassa A 17.59 km

*Fujeij A 14.31 km

Cars will regroup at Petra at noon and will

restart at 1:30 p.m.

heading north for the final five stages

*Fujeij B 14.39 kilometres

*Hassa B 17.42 km

*Hafira B 38.19 km

*Swaqqa B 34.39 km

*Tunaib B 17.35 km

The first car is due to arrive back at the finish line at the Forte Grand at 6:45 p.m.

FIA officials attend event

The International Motor Sports Federation FIA has appointed John Quenby as the observer for the Jordan Rally. Mr. Quenby is also a member of the FIA rally commission and is deputy member for the UK on the FIA World Motor Sport Council.

Wilhelm Lyding, president of the German Motor Sports Federation and Germany's representative in the FIA council will also be attending the event together with Takis Kyriakides, chief executive of the Cyprus Automobile Association. Mr. Kyriakides is one of a small group of observers that attend such events to report on their organisation and quality.

| YEAR | ENTRANTS | STARTERS | FINISHERS |
|------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1981 | 36 | 34 | 13 |
| 1982 | 29 | 27 | 17 |
| 1983 | 30 | 25 | 6 |
| 1984 | 31 | 29 | 12 |
| 1985 | 38 | 35 | 15 |
| 1986 | 50 | 40 | 15 |
| 1987 | 48 | 38 | 19 |
| 1988 | 36 | 32 | 10 |
| 1989 | 40 | 32 | 15 |
| 1990 | 41 | 38 | 15 |
| 1991 | 39 | 36 | 13 |
| 1992 | 46 | 38 | 22 |
| 1993 | 36 | 26 | 15 |

Jordan Rally record

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1981 Michel Sedel/Labrousse | Toyota Celica GT |
| 1982 Michel Sedel/Labrousse | Toyota Celica GT |
| 1983 Ronal Al Hageh/Qatar | Opel Manta 400 |
| 1984 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica Turbo |
| 1985 Ronal Al Hageh/Qatar | Ford Fiesta 900 SCRS |
| 1986 Ronal Al Hageh/Qatar | Ford Fiesta 900 SCRS |
| 1987 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica Turbo |
| 1988 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica Turbo |
| 1989 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica GT 4 |
| 1990 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica GT 4 |
| 1991 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica GT 4 |
| 1992 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica GT 4 |
| 1993 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica GT 4 |
| 1994 Ma'rouf Bin Sulayyem/UAE | Toyota Celica GT 4 |
| 1995 Abdullah Bakhshab/S. Arabia | Toyota Celica GT 4 |

FIFA suspend Greece from international competition

ZURICH (R) — Greece has been suspended from all international soccer competition for failing to bring its rules of operation into line with the sport's international governing body, FIFA confirmed on Wednesday.

Following repeated warnings, FIFA sent out a letter on Monday, informing the Greek Football Federation (EFO) that, with immediate effect, Greek clubs and the Greek national team would not be allowed to compete internationally or be involved in any international transfers.

The suspensions will remain in effect until new statutes, which were approved by FIFA in November 1994 and deal with touchy issues such as security, are recognised by the Greek government.

"The Greek federation has had new statutes for almost two years and has not had them approved by the government in Greece.

They cannot be a member of FIFA until they do so," said FIFA spokesperson Keith Cooper.

"It's their statutes that have not been recognised by their government. Any sport organisation needs government recognition to function properly."

Unless the situation is quickly resolved Greek clubs could find themselves left out of European Cup competitions which begin on July 17. Greece's first World Cup qualifier is scheduled for September 1 against Bosnia.

Magic calls it quits, again

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Magic Johnson, saying he was really "ready to give it up" this time, retired from the National Basketball Association again. At age 36, chances are he won't change his mind.

Johnson, whose comeback with the Los Angeles Lakers began in triumph and ended in disarray, announced his retirement Tuesday, saying it was time to return to his business interests.

"I was satisfied with my return to the NBA, although I would have hoped we would have gone further into the playoffs," he said in a statement issued by his agent, Lon Rosen. "But now, I am ready to give it up. It's time to move on."

"I am going out on my terms, something I couldn't say when I aborted a comeback in 1992."

Rosen said Johnson's decision to retire again has "nothing to do with his health."

Johnson, who turns 37 in August and would have been a free agent July 1, first retired just before the start of the 1991-92 season after learning he had the AIDS virus.

The three-time league MVP decided to come back before the 1992-93 season, but quit again shortly before the season when several players expressed concerns about playing with him.

After considering a comeback several times since, Johnson returned to the Lakers on Jan. 29, he played in 32 games and the Lakers won 20, helping them earn the fourth seed in the Western Conference playoffs. However, the Houston Rockets eliminated the Lakers in four games in the first round.

The Lakers, who won five NBA titles with Johnson, had no advance warning about Tuesday's announcement.

"From the time he came to this team almost 17 years ago, Earvin Johnson has been a very special part of our lives," said Jerry West, the Lakers' executive vice president of basketball operations.

"While this is a sad day, it's one that we always knew would come, and I would rather look at it remembering all the great moments he brought to this team and our fans."

Johnson coached the Lakers for the final 16 games of the 1993-94 season, going 5-11, and bought a 5 percent ownership interest on June 27, 1994. He sold his stake back to owner Jerry Buss before returning as a player.

Johnson played 32 games this season, averaging 14.6 points, 6.9 assists and 5.7 rebounds.

After coming back, he was sidelined by a calf injury. While he was dominant at times, he looked his age at other times. Nevertheless, he termed his comeback a success.

"The support generated throughout the league and from fans worldwide was tremendous and I want to thank everyone," Johnson said. "I also want to thank all Laker fans and the entire Laker organization, who has continually supported me...."

"This team has a great future and I will be excited to sit courtside and root them on to a championship very soon. In announcing this decision now, I wanted to give the Lakers every advantage in planning their future and securing one of the much-talked about free agents this summer."

Only 10 days earlier, after the Lakers were eliminated from the playoffs, Johnson reiterated his desire to play next season.

"This is where I want to be, I'm a Laker," he said at the time. "I'm looking at the Lakers as No. 1."

But he wasn't entirely happy with his role, saying he hoped to see more action at point guard than power forward and hinting he would welcome offers from other teams. However, all that changed in the ensuing 10 days.



Magic Johnson



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Norwegian observers begin Hebron patrols

HEBRON (AFP) — With maps in hand, smiling Norwegian observers began patrolling the streets of Hebron at dawn on Wednesday in preparation for Israel's partial withdrawal from the tense city.

But language problems and clear hostility from Jewish settlers vehemently opposed to Israel's plans to hand most of the city over to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) hinted at difficulties to come for the observer team.

"So far we are just trying to get to know the place," said Jan Groeningsen, a businessman and sometimes truck driver who previously worked with peacekeeping forces in former Yugoslavia. "I've never been welcomed so warmly to a city. It seems the people are happy to have us here," he said as curious children swarmed around his car in the Hebron market just outside the Avraham Avinu quarter housing several settler families.

The observers said their biggest immediate problem was finding their way through the winding streets and alleyways of the old Hebron neighbourhoods, where Palestinians and Jews cross paths in an atmosphere of tense mutual distrust.

"When we get lost, we just ask directions," said another observer, Prygve Guldrandson. But Palestinians hinted at bigger problems ahead, not-

ing that the Norwegians are armed only with walkie-talkies in an environment where hardliners from both the Muslim and Jewish camps confront one another with rocks, knives and automatic weapons.

In a first incident Wednesday, a Palestinian woman ran up to an observer squad to complain that an Israeli soldier had struck a Palestinian, only to discover that the Norwegians did not understand her.

"It would be better if they spoke Arabic so they could understand our problems," said the woman, Adawiya Natshe.

Other Palestinians said the observer mission was basically a symbolic presence that allows the Israeli government to say it is moving ahead on its pledge to turn over control of Hebron without really changing anything on the ground.

"The Norwegians come here like tourists, they don't have weapons and their presence is like a false flag," complained one resident, Ziyad Tahboob.

"They are sincere but they do not have any power," said another man who would only give his first name, "Mohammad."

"We saw them after the massacre and they did not do anything. I think this time it will be the same," he said, referring to the 1994 slaying by a Jewish settler of Palestinian worshippers at the Ibra-

himi Mosque.

Israel responded to the killings by permitting deployment from May to August 1994 of a first version of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), which served as a model for the Norwegian mission.

Jewish settlers were open in their hostility to the observers.

As one Norwegian patrol left its car to speak with a group of Palestinians near the market, a couple of Israeli settlers drove past and angrily yelled at them to clear their vehicle out of the way.

"We see this (deployment) as totally unnecessary and irrelevant. We have enough problems in Hebron without having an additional foreign force here that has nothing to do with the Middle East," said settler spokesman David Wilder.

The first TIPH comprised observers from Norway, Denmark and Italy. Odd Wibe, who is heading the Norwegian mission this time, said he expected to be joined "as soon as possible" by delegations from other countries.

He said Australia, Denmark, Italy, Sweden and Turkey had been "sounded out" about participating, but no formal invitations had been issued.

Hebron is the last West Bank city still under Israeli control.



INCREASED SECURITY: A bulldozer tears down the guard house and security wall surrounding the official residence of the Israeli prime minister. Construction is to start soon on a new security wall and guard house designed to withstand a car-bomb attack (Reuters photo)

Bosnians and Croats agree to unite armies

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Leaders of the Muslim-Croat federation agreed Tuesday to unite their armies within three years in a deal U.S. officials said would help the cohesion of the alliance between Bosnians and Croats.

The agreement reached here at the end of one day of talks called for the creation of a single defence ministry for the federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and a joint command structure. In announcing the deal, U.S. Secretary Warren Christopher stressed that all ministry personnel will be moved to Sarajevo by May 31.

"That is a very important step," he said.

President Bill Clinton separately told federation leaders that Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor would travel to Bosnia and Croatia to continue the work begun by Ron Brown, who died in a plane crash in Croatia on April 3.

Mr. Kantor will lead a group of business leaders to the Balkans to promote U.S. investment and reconstruc-

tion, White House Press Secretary Michael McCurry said.

Federation leaders also agreed to set up common financial institutions to help channel funds for reconstruction and pledged to step up preparations for upcoming elections in September.

The Washington Post daily said Wednesday that an internal report by the mission in Bosnia of the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), suggesting that problems with financing and in meeting OSCE conditions for the elections would delay the process until Nov. 1.

Tuesday's agreement reflects the U.S. "determination to see that the federation not only survives but thrives as the cornerstone of a peaceful and democratic Bosnia," Mr. Christopher said.

The Muslim-Croat federation and the Republika Srpska are the two entities that make up post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina under the peace agreement reached in Dayton, Ohio in November.

Iran denies attacking Beirut government

BEIRUT (AFP) — Iran's ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Ministry here Wednesday but denied that Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani had attacked the Lebanese government as "illegitimate and inept."

Hamayon Alizadeh also dismissed U.S. reports that Tehran was continuing to supply weapons to Hizbollah after the end of Israel's 17-day war in April against the Iranian-backed guerrillas in Lebanon.

"The statements attributed to president Rafsanjani are untrue and we completely deny it," Mr. Alizadeh told reporters after talks with the secretary general of the Lebanese Foreign Ministry, Zafer Al Hassan.

"I am not surprised by the publication of such statements because there is international pressure, namely American and Zionist (Israeli), to isolate Iran and damage its public image," Mr. Alizadeh said.

Earlier, Mr. Alizadeh, receiving Iranian aid for Lebanon at Beirut port, told reporters: "The Lebanese government is intelligent and knows its friends from its enemies."

Mr. Rafsanjani, in a speech translated into Russian at a summit of Central Asian leaders in Turkmenistan on Tuesday, attacked the United States, Israel and the Lebanese government.

"The Zionists (Israelis) organised a massacre of the innocents, and that offensive was even more insolent due to U.S. support," Mr. Rafsanjani said before the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO).

He reportedly branded the Lebanese government as "illegitimate and inept," and said a U.S.-brokered ceasefire accord between Israel and Hizbollah would "not lead to peace but to the destruction of the entire nation."

Officials at the Foreign Ministry said they were surprised by the statements attributed to Mr. Rafsanjani, adding they "contradicted" Iran's official position on Lebanon.

The Iranian ambassador also dismissed U.S. reports that it was sending weapons to Hizbollah fighters in Lebanon. "We have become accustomed in such Zionist and American lies and we completely deny these statements," he said.

An unnamed U.S. official said Tuesday that Iranian shipments of Katyusha rockets to Hizbollah were continuing to pass through Syria. Iran was involved in the international diplomatic drive to stop Israel's offensive aimed at halting Hizbollah rocket attacks on its northern territory.

Since the ceasefire accord to spare civilians on both sides of the border came into effect on April 27, Iranian envoys have visited Lebanon to help in repairing the damage which Israel's onslaught left behind.

COLUMN 8

Zhirinovskiy urges new tsar for Russia

MOSCOW (R) — Ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy who will run for Russian president in June said the country needed a new tsar to rule it. "Russia is an empire. It cannot be a humiliated republic with a rotten democracy, a declining economy and a weak army," Mr. Zhirinovskiy, one of 11 presidential candidates, said in his first official election broadcast run by Mayak Radio. "We need an emperor. A president with huge powers similar to those of the tsars or of the (Communist Party's) general secretaries," he added. Mr. Zhirinovskiy lost to Boris Yeltsin in Russia's first presidential election in 1991. Currently he stands fourth in public opinion polls after Mr. Yeltsin. Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov and liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky. Political analysts say he stands little chance of winning the election due on June 16.

Teacher rapped over 'IRA bomb' lesson

LONDON (AFP) — A teacher who told her pupils that an IRA bomb had been planted in their school has come under fire from parents despite a plea that it was intended to "stimulate the children's imagination," the press reported. Carol Wilson planted a box, containing an alarm clock, inside the school building in Bognor Regis, southern England, and arranged for a colleague to warn the class that a bomb warning had been received by telephone. She then asked her pupils to search for the "device," and when a boy found it she carried it outside carefully. It was only after pupils became upset that she told the nine-year-olds and ten-year-olds that it was a fake. Ms. Wilson then told the children to write essays on what had happened and how they had felt. One mother quoted in the Sun newspaper, Deborah Cronin, 31, said: "This is an absolute disgrace. Some of the poor lads were sobbing their hearts out." Her son Danny, 10, who helped look for the "bomb," said: "All my friends were crying because we thought we'd be blown up." The school's headmistress, Becky Maw, is quoted in the Times as defending Ms. Wilson's actions. "It was obviously not a bomb," she said. "We have to do things to capture the children's imagination." A local authority spokeswoman said the intention behind the hoax was understood, but "we feel a misjudgment was made and we are investigating the matter." The incident occurred on May 9, two weeks after two IRA (Irish Republican Army) bombs failed to explode under Hammersmith Bridge in West London.

Claudia Schiffer wins sausage ban

HAMBURG, Germany (AFP) — Top model Claudia Schiffer has won a court order preventing a Hamburg art gallery from displaying her naked likeness on the sausage in a hot-dog, her lawyer Matthias Prinz said. The court found that this and other works by American pop artist Mel Ramos constituted a severe affront to the personal rights of the German super-model, and ordered the Levy Gallery not to display, sell or catalogue them. Violation of this order is punishable with a penalty of 500,000 marks (\$333,000). Gallery proprietor Thomas Levy had removed the four offending pictures before Monday night's inauguration of the Ramos exhibition.

Likud activist shoots Peres' supporter

TEL AVIV (R) — A right-wing Likud Party activist shot and wounded a supporter of Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Wednesday in the first violence of the May 29 election campaign.

The incident, in the Tel Aviv suburb of Herzliya, sounded alarm bells in Israel six months after a right-wing Jew assassinated Mr. Peres' predecessor, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The Labour Party supporter, a new immigrant from Russia, was putting up posters for the election when a group of Likud activists demanded he stop, a Labour spokesman said.

When he refused, they shot him in the foot and drove away, the spokesman added. "The car from which the

shots were fired had been rented to the Likud election centre. The driver was arrested," said police spokesman Eric Bar-Chen.

"What has happened is awful. This kind of activity in the field is not right," said Labour campaign spokesman Yoram Doni. He said that Labour Party Chairman Nissim Zivili called on all of its campaigners "to exercise restraint and not to respond with violence."

A Likud Party spokesman said he was checking to see if any of their activists was involved.

"We reject any Labour charge this is an organised Likud attempt to intimidate Labour activists," said spokesman Michael Stoltz. "In the past few weeks,

(Likud leader) Benjamin Netanyahu has given clear instruction to Likud activists to behave properly, and not to use violence or force and to act within the law when campaigning."

After Mr. Rabin's assassination, at a Nov. 4 peace rally in Tel Aviv, his widow Leah accused Mr. Netanyahu of helping to create an atmosphere of hate in Israel against her husband, who spearheaded peace moves with the Palestinians.

Israeli election campaigns have rarely been marred by shootings, although heckling and scuffling are common.

"It looks like the mournful atmosphere after the Rabin assassination has had a short shelf life," an Israeli radio commentator said.

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|-----------------------|---|----------|-----|--|---------|
| No. | Guest Name | Nat. | No. | Guest Name | Nat. |
| 1 | S. Al-Deeb MD. Neurologist | Saudi A. | 18 | William Miller Pharmacy D.D. | U.S.A. |
| 2 | Arfan Al-Hani MD. Cardiologist | U.S.A. | 19 | Gert Muhr MD. Anesthesi Surgeon | Germany |
| 3 | Osama Al-Mir MD. Neurosurgeon | U.S.A. | 20 | Amel Nabe MD. Nephrologist | U.K |
| 4 | Millie Anderson MD. Neurologist | U.K | 21 | Baharat N. Nathwani MD. Pathologist | U.S.A |
| 5 | David Barrett MD. Urosurgeon | U.S.A. | 22 | William Oberheim MD. Urosurgeon | U.S.A. |
| 6 | William Castelli MD. Cardiologist | U.S.A. | 23 | Constantinos Polidis MD. Oncematologist | Greece |
| 7 | Richard Collins MD. Ophthalmologist | U.K | 24 | Mark Rake MD. Gastroenterologist | U.K |
| 8 | M. Dillon MD. Paediatrician | U.K | 25 | Med J. Rassewber MD. Urosurgeon | Germany |
| 9 | Georges El-Khoury MD. Radiologist | U.S.A. | 26 | M. Virginia Ruth Ph.D. Nursing | U.S.A. |
| 10 | M.J. Goggins MD. Nephrologist | U.K | 27 | B. Stammenberger MD. F.T. Surgeon | Austria |
| 11 | Haider Goussous MD. General & Vascular Surgeon | U.S.A. | 28 | D. Van Steenberghe MD. Dentist | Belgium |
| 12 | R. Groner MD Plastic Surgeon | Germany | 29 | A.J. Tajik MD. Cardiologist | U.S.A. |
| 13 | P.R. Hawley MD. Consultant Surgeon | U.K | 30 | N.A. Tamimi MD. Nephrologist | U.K |
| 14 | Uwe Beermann MD. Nephrologist | Germany | 31 | John Tripp MD. Paediatrician | U.K |
| 15 | Mark S. Huberman MD. Oncologist | U.S.A. | 32 | J.C.D. Wells MD. Anesthesiologist | U.K |
| 16 | John Kauls MD. Internist | U.K | 33 | Christopher J. White MD. Cardiologist | U.K |
| 17 | John Kenwright MD. | U.K | 34 | M. Gazi Yasargil MD. | U.S.A |

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

| I. Philadelphia Hotel Thursday 16th May | | | |
|---|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Time | Hall A | Hall B | Hall C |
| Morning | General Surgery | Oncology | Paediatrics |
| | Nephrology | Orthopedic Surgery | Paediatrics |
| After Noon | Nephrology | Plastic Surgery | Orthopedics |
| | E.N.T. | Obst. & Gyn. | Orthopedics |
| Friday 17th May | | | |
| Time | Hall A | Hall B | Hall C |
| Morning | Laboratory | Obst. & Gyn. | Radiology |
| | Laboratory | Anesthesiology | Radiology |
| After Noon | Nursing | Pharmacy | Anesthesiology |
| | Dentistry | Cardio-Vascular | Gastroenterology |
| II. King Hussein Medical Center Thursday 16th May | | | |
| Time | Farah Auditorium | | |
| 2:00-4:00 p.m. | Cardiology | | |
| 4:00-5:30 p.m. | Jordan-Mayo Satellite Teleconference (Atrial Fibrillation) | | |
| 5:30-6:15 p.m. | Cardiology | | |

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONGRESS/ROYAL MEDICAL SERVICES

Jordan / Mayo Satellite Medical Teleconference

Atrial Fibrillation
May 16, 1996
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Farah Center Auditorium
King Hussein Medical Center

| Jordan Time | Central Time | Activities |
|-------------|--------------|--|
| 4:00 p.m. | 8:00 a.m. | Opening Remarks Dr. Goussous - Introduction to Dr. Warnes |
| 4:02 p.m. | 8:02 a.m. | Dr. Warnes - Introduction of first presenter: Dr. Stephen Kopecky |
| 4:03 p.m. | 8:03 a.m. | Anticoagulants: What Have We Learned from Randomized Trials? Dr. Stephen Kopecky (FIFTEEN MINUTES) |
| 4:18 p.m. | 8:18 a.m. | Dr. Warnes - Introduction to second presenter: Dr. Bijoy Khandheria |
| 4:18 p.m. | 8:18 a.m. | Cardioversion Who-How-When? Dr. Bijoy Khandheria (FIFTEEN MINUTES) |
| 4:33 p.m. | 8:33 a.m. | Dr. Warnes - Introduction to third presenter: Dr. Robert Ren |
| 4:33 p.m. | 8:33 a.m. | Medical and Non-Medical Management of Atrial Fibrillation Dr. Robert Ren (TWENTY-MINUTES) |
| 4:53 p.m. | 8:53 a.m. | Dr. Warnes - Introduction to fourth presenter: Dr. Hartzell Schaff |
| 4:53 p.m. | 8:53 a.m. | The MAZE Procedure Dr. Hartzell Schaff (FIFTEEN MINUTES) |
| 5:08 p.m. | 9:08 a.m. | Question & Answer Segment (TWENTY MINUTES) Moderated By Dr. A.J. Tajik MD Gen Dr. Goussous |
| 5:28 p.m. | 9:28 a.m. | Closing Remarks Dr. Warnes |